

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

THE HOUSEKEEPER'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

To resume. The night passed as usual, without producing any change for the better in Miss Halcombe. The next day, she seemed to improve a little. The day after that, her ladyship the Countess, without mentioning the object of her journey to any one in my hearing, proceeded by the morning train to London; her noble husband, with his customary attention, accompanying her to the station.

I was now left in sole charge of Miss Halcombe, with every apparent chance, in consequence of her sister's resolution not to leave the bedside, of having Lady Glyde herself to nurse next.

The only circumstance of any importance that happened in the course of the day, was the occurrence of another unpleasant meeting between the doctor and the Count.

His lordship, on returning from the station, stepped up into Miss Halcombe's sitting-room to make his inquiries. I went out from the bedroom to speak to him; Mr. Dawson and Lady Glyde being both with the patient at the time. The Count asked me many questions about the treatment and the symptoms. I informed him that the treatment was of the kind described as "saline;" and that the symptoms, between the attacks of fever, were certainly those of increasing weakness and exhaustion. Just as I was mentioning these last particulars, Mr. Dawson came out from the bedroom.

"Good morning, sir," said his lordship, stepping forward in the most urbane manner, and stopping the doctor, with a high-bred resolution impossible to resist, "I greatly fear you find no improvement in the symptoms to-day?"

"I find decided improvement," answered Mr. Dawson.

"You still persist in your lowering treatment of this case of fever?" continued his lordship.

"I persist in the treatment which is justified by my own professional experience," said Mr. Dawson.

"Permit me to put one question to you on the vast subject of professional experience," observed the Count. "I presume to offer no more advice—I only presume to make an inquiry. You live at some distance, sir, from the gigantic centres of scientific activity—

London and Paris. Have you ever heard of the wasting effects of fever being reasonably and intelligibly repaired by fortifying the exhausted patient with brandy, wine, ammonia, and quinine. Has that new heresy of the highest medical authorities ever reached your ears—Yes, or No?"

"When a professional man puts that question to me, I shall be glad to answer him," said the doctor, opening the door to go out. "You are not a professional man; and I beg to decline answering *you*."

Buffeted in this inexcusably uncivil way, on one cheek, the Count, like a practical Christian, immediately turned the other, and said, in the sweetest manner, "Good morning, Mr. Dawson."

If my late beloved husband had been so fortunate as to know his lordship, how highly he and the Count would have esteemed each other!

Her ladyship the Countess returned by the last train that night, and brought with her the nurse from London. I was instructed that this person's name was Mrs. Rubelle. Her personal appearance, and her imperfect English, when she spoke, informed me that she was a foreigner.

I have always cultivated a feeling of humane indulgence for foreigners. They do not possess our blessings and advantages; and they are, for the most part, brought up in the blind errors of popery. It has also always been my precept and practice, as it was my dear husband's precept and practice before me (see Sermon *XXIX*, in the Collection by the late Rev. Samuel Michelson, M.A.), to do as I would be done by. On both these accounts, I will not say that Mrs. Rubelle struck me as being a small, wiry, sly person, of fifty or thereabouts, with a dark brown, or Creole complexion, and watchful light grey eyes. Nor will I mention, for the reasons just alleged, that I thought her dress, though it was of the plainest black silk, inappropriately costly in texture and unnecessarily refined in trimming and finish, for a person in her position in life. I should not like these things to be said of me, and therefore it is my duty not to say them of Mrs. Rubelle. I will merely mention that her manners were—not perhaps unpleasantly reserved—but only remarkably quiet and retiring; that she looked about her a great deal, and said very little, which might have arisen quite as much from her own modesty, as

from distrust of her position at Blackwater Park; and that she declined to partake of supper (which was curious, perhaps, but surely not suspicious?), although I myself politely invited her to that meal, in my own room.

At the Count's particular suggestion (so like his lordship's forgiving kindness!), it was arranged that Mrs. Rubelle should not enter on her duties, until she had been seen and approved by the doctor the next morning. I sat up that night. Lady Glyde appeared to be very unwilling that the new nurse should be employed to attend on Miss Halcombe. Such want of liberality towards a foreigner on the part of a lady of her education and refinement surprised me. I ventured to say, "My lady, we must all remember not to be hasty in our judgments on our inferiors—especially when they come from foreign parts." Lady Glyde did not appear to attend to me. She only sighed, and kissed Miss Halcombe's hand as it lay on the counterpane. Scarcely a judicious proceeding in a sick-room, with a patient whom it was highly desirable not to excite. But poor Lady Glyde knew nothing of nursing—nothing whatever, I am sorry to say.

The next morning, Mrs. Rubelle was sent to the sitting-room, to be approved by the doctor, on his way through to the bedroom. I left Lady Glyde with Miss Halcombe, who was slumbering at the time, and joined Mrs. Rubelle, with the object of kindly preventing her from feeling strange and nervous in consequence of the uncertainty of her situation. She did not appear to see it in that light. She seemed to be quite satisfied, beforehand, that Mr. Dawson would approve of her; and she sat calmly looking out of window, with every appearance of enjoying the country air. Some people might have thought such conduct suggestive of brazen assurance. I beg to say that I more liberally set it down to extraordinary strength of mind.

Instead of the doctor coming up to us, I was sent for to see the doctor. I thought this change of affairs rather odd, but Mrs. Rubelle did not appear to be affected by it in any way. I left her still calmly looking out of window, and still silently enjoying the country air.

Mr. Dawson was waiting for me, by himself, in the breakfast-room.

"About this new nurse, Mrs. Michelson," said the doctor.

"Yes, sir?"

"I find that she has been brought here from London by the wife of that fat old foreigner, who is always trying to interfere with me. Mrs. Michelson, the fat old foreigner is a Quack."

This was very rude. I was naturally shocked at it.

"Are you aware, sir," I said, "that you are talking of a nobleman?"

"Pooh! He isn't the first Quack with a handle to his name. They're all Counts—hang 'em!"

"He would not be a friend of Sir Percival Glyde's, sir, if he was not a member of the highest aristocracy—excepting the English aristocracy, of course."

"Very well, Mrs. Michelson, call him what you like; and let us get back to the nurse. I have been objecting to her already."

"Without having seen her, sir?"

"Yes; without having seen her. She may be the best nurse in existence; but she is not a nurse of my providing. I have put that objection to Sir Percival, as the master of the house. He doesn't support me. He says a nurse of my providing would have been a stranger from London also; and he thinks the woman ought to have a trial, after his wife's aunt has taken the trouble to fetch her from London. There is some justice in that; and I can't decently say No. But I have made it a condition that she is to go at once, if I find reason to complain of her. This proposal being one which I have some right to make, as medical attendant, Sir Percival has consented to it. Now, Mrs. Michelson, I know I can depend on you; and I want you to keep a sharp eye on the nurse, for the first day or two, and to see that she gives Miss Halcombe no medicines but mine. This foreign nobleman of yours is dying to try his quack remedies (mesmerism included) on my patient; and a nurse who is brought here by his wife may be a little too willing to help him. You understand? Very well, then, we may go up-stairs. Is the nurse there? I'll say a word to her, before she goes into the sick-room."

We found Mrs. Rubelle still enjoying herself at the window. When I introduced her to Mr. Dawson, neither the doctor's doubtful looks nor the doctor's searching questions appeared to confuse her in the least. She answered him quietly in her broken English; and, though he tried hard to puzzle her, she never betrayed the least ignorance, so far, about any part of her duties. This was doubtless the result of strength of mind, as I said before, and not of brazen assurance by any means.

We all went into the bedroom. Mrs. Rubelle looked, very attentively, at the patient; curtsied to Lady Glyde; set one or two little things right in the room; and sat down quietly in a corner to wait until she was wanted. Her ladyship seemed startled and annoyed by the appearance of the strange nurse. No one said anything, for fear of rousing Miss Halcombe, who was still slumbering—except the doctor, who whispered a question about the night. I softly answered, "Much as usual," and then Mr. Dawson went out. Lady Glyde followed him, I suppose to speak about Mrs. Rubelle. For my own part, I had made up my mind already that this quiet foreign person would keep her situation. She had all her wits about her; and she certainly understood her business. So far, I could hardly have done much better, by the bedside, myself.

Remembering Mr. Dawson's caution to me, I subjected Mrs. Rubelle to a severe scrutiny, at certain intervals, for the next three or four days. I over and over again entered the room softly and suddenly, but I never found her out in any suspicious action. Lady Glyde, who watched her as attentively as I did, discovered

nothing either. I never detected a sign of the medicine bottles being tampered with; I never saw Mrs. Rubelle say a word to the Count, or the Count to her. She managed Miss Halcombe with unquestionable care and discretion. The poor lady wavered backwards and forwards between a sort of sleepy exhaustion which was half faintness and half slumbering, and attacks of fever which brought with them more or less of wandering in her mind. Mrs. Rubelle never disturbed her in the first case, and never startled her, in the second, by appearing too suddenly at the bedside in the character of a stranger. Honour to whom honour is due (whether foreign or English)—and I give her privilege impartially to Mrs. Rubelle. She was remarkably uncommunicative about herself, and she was too quietly independent of all advice from experienced persons who understood the duties of a sick-room—but, with these drawbacks, she was a good nurse; and she never gave either Lady Glyde or Mr. Dawson the shadow of a reason for complaining of her.

The next circumstance of importance that occurred in the house was the temporary absence of the Count, occasioned by business which took him to London. He went away (I think) on the morning of the fourth day after the arrival of Mrs. Rubelle; and, at parting, he spoke to Lady Glyde, very seriously, in my presence, on the subject of Miss Halcombe.

"Trust Mr. Dawson," he said, "for a few days more, if you please. But, if there is not some change for the better, in that time, send for advice from London, which this mule of a doctor must accept in spite of himself. Offend Mr. Dawson, and save Miss Halcombe. I say those words seriously, on my word of honour and from the bottom of my heart."

His lordship spoke with extreme feeling and kindness. But poor Lady Glyde's nerves were so completely broken down that she seemed quite frightened at him. She trembled from head to foot; and allowed him to take his leave, without uttering a word on her side. She turned to me, when he had gone, and said, "Oh, Mrs. Michelson, I am heart-broken about my sister, and I have no friend to advise me! Do you think Mr. Dawson is wrong? He told me himself, this morning, that there was no fear, and no need of fresh advice."

"With all respect to Mr. Dawson," I answered, "in your ladyship's place, I should remember the Count's advice."

Lady Glyde turned away from me suddenly, with an appearance of despair, for which I was quite unable to account.

"His advice!" she said to herself. "God help us—his advice!"

The Count was away from Blackwater Park, as nearly as I remember, a week.

Sir Percival seemed to feel the loss of his lordship in various ways, and appeared also, I thought, much depressed and altered by the sickness and sorrow in the house. Occasionally, he was so very restless, that I could not help

noticing it; coming and going, and wandering here and there and everywhere in the grounds. His inquiries about Miss Halcombe, and about his lady (whose failing health seemed to cost him sincere anxiety), were most attentive. I think his heart was much softened. If some kind clerical friend—some such friend as he might have found in my late excellent husband—had been near him at this time, cheering moral progress might have been made with Sir Percival. I seldom find myself mistaken on a point of this sort; having had experience to guide me in my happy married days.

Her ladyship, the Countess, who was now the only company for Sir Percival down stairs, rather neglected him, as I considered. Or, perhaps, it might have been that he neglected her. A stranger might almost have supposed that they were bent, now they were left together alone, on actually avoiding one another. This, of course, could not be. But it did so happen, nevertheless, that the Countess made her dinner at luncheon-time, and that she always came upstairs towards evening, although Mrs. Rubelle had taken the nursing duties entirely off her hands. Sir Percival dined by himself; and William (the man out of livery) made the remark, in my hearing, that his master had put himself on half rations of food and on a double allowance of drink. I attach no importance to such an insolent observation as this, on the part of a servant. I reprobated it at the time; and I wish to be understood as reprobating it once more, on this occasion.

In the course of the next few days, Miss Halcombe did certainly seem to all of us to be mending a little. Our faith in Mr. Dawson revived. He seemed to be very confident about the case; and he assured Lady Glyde, when she spoke to him on the subject, that he would himself propose to send for a physician, the moment he felt so much as the shadow of a doubt crossing his own mind.

The only person among us who did not appear to be relieved by these words, was the Countess. She said to me privately that she could not feel easy about Miss Halcombe, on Mr. Dawson's authority, and that she should wait anxiously for her husband's opinion, on his return. That return, his letters informed her, would take place in three days' time. The Count and Countess corresponded regularly every morning, during his lordship's absence. They were in that respect, as in all others, a pattern to married people.

On the evening of the third day, I noticed a change in Miss Halcombe, which caused me serious apprehension. Mrs. Rubelle noticed it too. We said nothing on the subject to Lady Glyde, who was then lying asleep, completely overpowered by exhaustion, on the sofa in the sitting-room.

Mr. Dawson did not pay his evening visit till later than usual. As soon as he set eyes on his patient, I saw his face alter. He tried to hide it; but he looked both confused and alarmed. A messenger was sent to his resi-

dence for his medicine-chest, disinfecting preparations were used in the room, and a bed was made up for him in the house by his own directions. "Has the fever turned to infection?" I whispered to him. "I am afraid it has," he answered; "we shall know better to-morrow morning."

By Mr. Dawson's own directions Lady Glyde was kept in ignorance of this change for the worse. He himself absolutely forbade her, on account of her health, to join us in the bedroom that night. She tried to resist—there was a sad scene—but he had his medical authority to support him; and he carried his point.

The next morning, one of the men servants was sent to London, at eleven o'clock, with a letter to a physician in town, and with orders to bring the new doctor back with him by the earliest possible train. Half an hour after the messenger had gone, the Count returned to Blackwater Park.

The Countess, on her own responsibility, immediately brought him in to see the patient. There was no impropriety that I could discover in her taking this course. His lordship was a married man; he was old enough to be Miss Halcombe's father; and he saw her in the presence of a female relative, Lady Glyde's aunt. Mr. Dawson nevertheless protested against his presence in the room; but, I could plainly remark the doctor was too much alarmed to make any serious resistance on this occasion.

The poor suffering lady was past knowing any one about her. She seemed to take her friends for enemies. When the Count approached, her bedside, her eyes, which had been wandering incessantly round and round the room before, settled on his face, with a dreadful stare of terror, which I shall remember to my dying day. The Count sat down by her; felt her pulse, and her temples; looked at her very attentively; and then turned round upon the doctor with such an expression of indignation and contempt in his face, that the words failed on Mr Dawson's lips, and he stood, for a moment, pale with anger and alarm—pale and perfectly speechless.

His lordship looked next at me.

"When did the change happen?" he asked.

I told him the time.

"Has Lady Glyde been in the room since?"

I replied that she had not. The doctor had absolutely forbidden her to come into the room, on the evening before, and had repeated the order again in the morning.

"Have you and Mrs. Rubelle been made aware of the full extent of the mischief?"—was his next question.

We were aware, I answered, that the lady was considered infectious. He stopped me, before I could add anything more.

"It is Typhus Fever," he said.

In the minute that passed, while these questions and answers were going on, Mr. Dawson recovered himself, and addressed the Count, with his customary firmness.

"It is *not* typhus fever," he said, sharply. "I protest against this intrusion, sir. No one

has a right to put questions here, but me. I have done my duty to the best of my ability——"

The Count interrupted him, not by words, but only by pointing to the bed. Mr. Dawson seemed to feel that silent contradiction to his assertion of his own ability, and to grow only the more angry under it.

"I say I have done my duty," he reiterated. "A physician has been sent for from London. I will consult on the nature of the fever with him, and with no one else. I insist on your leaving the room."

"I entered this room, sir, in the sacred interests of humanity," said the Count. "And in the same interests, if the coming of the physician is delayed, I will enter it again. I warn you once more that the fever has turned to Typhus, and that your treatment is responsible for this lamentable change. If that unhappy lady dies, I will give my testimony in a court of justice that your ignorance and obstinacy have been the cause of her death."

Before Mr. Dawson could answer, before the Count could leave us, the door was opened from the sitting-room, and we saw Lady Glyde on the threshold.

"I *must*, and *will* come in," she said, with extraordinary firmness.

Instead of stopping her, the Count moved into the sitting-room, and made way for her to go in. On all other occasions, he was the last man in the world to forget anything; but, in the surprise of the moment, he apparently forgot the danger of infection from typhus, and the urgent necessity of forcing Lady Glyde to take proper care of herself.

To my surprise, Mr. Dawson showed more presence of mind. He stopped her ladyship at the first step she took towards the bedside.

"I am sincerely sorry, I am sincerely grieved," he said. "The fever may, I fear, be infectious. Until I am certain that it is not, I entreat you to keep out of the room."

She struggled for a moment; then suddenly dropped her arms, and sank forward. She had fainted. The Countess and I took her from the doctor, and carried her into her own room. The Count preceded us, and waited in the passage, till I came out, and told him that we had recovered her from the swoon.

I went back to the doctor to tell him, by Lady Glyde's desire, that she insisted on speaking to him immediately. He withdrew at once to quiet her ladyship's agitation, and to assure her of the physician's arrival in the course of a few hours. Those hours passed very slowly. Sir Percival and the Count were together down stairs, and sent up, from time to time, to make their inquiries. At last, between five and six o'clock, to our great relief, the physician came.

He was a younger man than Mr. Dawson; very serious, and very decided. What he thought of the previous treatment, I cannot say; but it struck me as curious that he put many more questions to myself and to Mrs. Rubelle than he put to the doctor, and that he

did not appear to listen with much interest to what Mr. Dawson said, while he was examining Mr. Dawson's patient. I began to suspect, from what I observed in this way, that the Count had been right about the illness all the way through; and I was naturally confirmed in that idea, when Mr. Dawson, after some little delay, asked the one important question which the London doctor had been sent for to set at rest.

"What is your opinion of the fever?" he inquired.

"Typhus," replied the physician. "Typhus fever beyond all doubt."

That quiet foreign person, Mrs. Rubelle, crossed her thin, brown hands in front of her, and looked at me with a very significant smile. The Count himself could hardly have appeared more gratified, if he had been present in the room, and had heard the confirmation of his own opinion.

After giving us some useful directions about the management of the patient, and mentioning that he would come again in five days' time, the physician withdrew to consult in private with Mr. Dawson. He would offer no opinion on Miss Halcombe's chances of recovery: he said it was impossible at that stage of the illness to pronounce, one way or the other.

The five days passed anxiously.

Countess Fosco and myself took it by turns to relieve Mrs. Rubelle; Miss Halcombe's condition growing worse and worse, and requiring our utmost care and attention. It was a terribly trying time. Lady Glyde (supported as Mr. Dawson said, by the constant strain of her suspense on her sister's account) rallied in the most extraordinary manner, and showed a firmness and determination for which I should myself never have given her credit. She insisted on coming into the sick-room, two or three times every day, to look at Miss Halcombe with her own eyes; promising not to go too close to the bed, if the doctor would consent to her wishes, so far. Mr. Dawson very unwillingly made the concession required of him: I think he saw that it was hopeless to dispute with her. She came in every day; and she self-denyingly kept her promise. I felt it personally so distressing (as reminding me of my own affliction during my husband's last illness) to see how she suffered under these circumstances, that I must beg not to dwell on this part of the subject any longer. It is more agreeable to me to mention that no fresh disputes took place between Mr. Dawson and the Count. His lordship made all his inquiries by deputy; and remained continually in company with Sir Percival, down stairs.

On the fifth day, the physician came again, and gave us a little hope. He said the tenth day from the first appearance of the typhus would probably decide the result of the illness, and he arranged for his third visit to take place on that date. The interval passed as before—except that the Count went to London again, one morning, and returned at night.

On the tenth day, it pleased a merciful Providence to relieve our household from all further anxiety and alarm. The physician positively assured us that Miss Halcombe was out of danger. "She wants no doctor, now—all she requires is careful watching and nursing, for some time to come; and that I see she has." Those were his own words. That evening I read my husband's touching sermon on Recovery from Sickness, with more happiness and advantage (in a spiritual point of view) than I ever remember to have derived from it before.

The effect of the good news on poor Lady Glyde was, I grieve to say, quite overpowering. She was too weak to bear the violent reaction; and, in another day or two, she sank into a state of debility and depression, which obliged her to keep her room. Rest and quiet, and change of air afterwards, were the best remedies which Mr. Dawson could suggest for her benefit. It was fortunate that matters were no worse, for, on the very day after she took to her room, the Count and the doctor had another disagreement; and, this time, the dispute between them was of so serious a nature, that Mr. Dawson left the house.

I was not present at the time; but I understood that the subject of the dispute was the amount of nourishment which it was necessary to give to assist Miss Halcombe's convalescence, after the exhaustion of the fever. Mr. Dawson, now that his patient was safe, was less inclined than ever to submit to unprofessional interference; and the Count (I cannot imagine why) lost all the self-control which he had so judiciously preserved on former occasions, and taunted the doctor, over and over again, with his mistake about the fever, when it changed to typhus. The unfortunate affair ended in Mr. Dawson's appealing to Sir Percival, and threatening (now that he could leave without absolute danger to Miss Halcombe) to withdraw from his attendance at Blackwater Park, if the Count's interference was not peremptorily suppressed from that moment. Sir Percival's reply (though not designedly uncivil) had only resulted in making matters worse; and Mr. Dawson had thereupon withdrawn from the house, in a state of extreme indignation at Count Fosco's usage of him, and had sent in his bill the next morning.

We were now, therefore, left without the attendance of a medical man. Although there was no actual necessity for another doctor—nursing and watching being, as the physician had observed, all that Miss Halcombe required—I should still, if my authority had been consulted, have obtained professional assistance, from some other quarter, for form's sake.

The matter did not seem to strike Sir Percival in that light. He said it would be time enough to send for another doctor, if Miss Halcombe showed any signs of a relapse. In the mean while, we had the Count to consult in any minor difficulty; and we need not unnecessarily disturb our patient, in her present weak and nervous condition, by the presence of a stranger at her bedside. There was much that was reason-

able, no doubt, in these considerations; but they left me a little anxious, nevertheless. Nor was I quite satisfied, in my own mind, of the propriety of our concealing the doctor's absence, as we did, from Lady Glyde. It was a merciful deception, I admit—for she was in no state to bear any fresh anxieties. But still it was a deception; and, as such, to a person of my principles, at best a doubtful proceeding.

A second perplexing circumstance which happened on the same day, and which took me completely by surprise, added greatly to the sense of uneasiness that was now weighing on my mind.

I was sent for to see Sir Percival in the library. The Count, who was with him when I went in, immediately rose and left us alone together. Sir Percival civilly asked me to take a seat; and then, to my great astonishment, addressed me in these terms:

"I want to speak to you, Mrs. Michelson, about a matter which I decided on some time ago, and which I should have mentioned before, but for the sickness and trouble in the house. In plain words, I have reasons for wishing to break up my establishment immediately at this place—leaving you in charge, of course, as usual. As soon as Lady Glyde and Miss Halcombe can travel, they must both have change of air. My friends, Count Fosco and the Countess, will leave us, before that time, to live in the neighbourhood of London. And I have reasons for not opening the house to any more company, with a view to economising as carefully as I can. I don't blame you—but my expenses here are a great deal too heavy. In short, I shall sell the horses, and get rid of all the servants at once. I never do things by halves, as you know; and I mean to have the house clear of a pack of useless people by this time to-morrow."

I listened to him, perfectly aghast with astonishment.

"Do you mean, Sir Percival, that I am to dismiss the in-door servants, under my charge, without the usual month's warning?" I asked.

"Certainly, I do. We may all be out of the house before another month; and I am not going to leave the servants here in idleness, with no master to wait on."

"Who is to do the cooking, Sir Percival, while you are still staying here?"

"Margaret Porcher can roast and boil—keep her. What do I want with a cook, if I don't mean to give any dinner-parties?"

"The servant you have mentioned is the most unintelligent servant in the house, Sir Percival—"

"Keep her, I tell you; and have a woman in from the village to do the cleaning, and go away again. My weekly expenses must and shall be lowered immediately. I don't send for you to make objections, Mrs. Michelson—I send for you to carry out my plans of economy. Dismiss the whole lazy pack of in-door servants to-morrow, except Porcher. She is as strong as a horse—and we'll make her work like a horse."

"You will excuse me for reminding you, Sir Percival, that if the servants go to-morrow, they must have a month's wages in lieu of a month's warning."

"Let them! A month's wages saves a month's waste and gluttony in the servants' hall."

This last remark conveyed an aspersion of the most offensive kind on my management. I had too much self-respect to defend myself under so gross an imputation. Christian consideration for the helpless position of Miss Halcombe and Lady Glyde, and for the serious inconvenience which my sudden absence might inflict on them, alone prevented me from resigning my situation on the spot. I rose immediately. It would have lowered me in my own estimation to have permitted the interview to continue a moment longer.

"After that last remark, Sir Percival, I have nothing more to say. Your directions shall be attended to." Pronouncing those words, I bowed my head with the most distant respect, and went out of the room.

The next day, the servants left in a body. Sir Percival himself dismissed the grooms and stablemen; sending them, with all the horses but one, to London. Of the whole domestic establishment, in-doors and out, there now remained only myself, Margaret Porcher, and the gardener; this last living in his own cottage, and being wanted to take care of the one horse that remained in the stables.

With the house left in this strange and lonely condition; with the mistress of it ill in her room; with Miss Halcombe still as helpless as a child; and with the doctor's attendance withdrawn from us in enmity—it was surely not unnatural that my spirits should sink, and my customary composure be very hard to maintain. My mind was ill at ease. I wished the two poor ladies both well again; and I wished myself away from Blackwater Park.

LATIN LONDON.

WHEN we had crossed from Gaul, guided by the lofty seaglight of Dubræ (Dover, if you will), our mariners cast anchor under the massive walls of the citadel of Rutupis, chief port in our remote province of Britain, which is, in your tongue, Richborough, near Sandwich. I, Quintus Pertinax, of Ghoston, in the Elysian Fields, shade, being then in the flesh, relished the oysters that I ate at my first British supper. For I was a Roman gentleman knowing well what is good, and am so still.

Incurable in ghosts is their habit of wandering. You will have observed that I was at Rutupis just now; behold me, then, in London. My own Roman London not at all, of course. We wander, and have wandered for more years than I can count. I was in the midst of the broil when London was sacked and wasted by the Danes. It amused me in those days to sit by the clear water-side with that lean ghost of a Cassius, and cast shadows of all sorts upon the

swans as they sailed by the solitude of the dead town between the ruins of the bridge and under the great trees. That did not last long, for your live man is an active fellow. The living are the quick and bustling. Men soon swarmed again within the thick old stone walls ribbed with tile, and poured in and out of the town gates, like ants in and out of their ant-holes.

I cannot help it if I mix together many recollections of that town of yours. I had a little daughter buried in our cemetery of Londinium, under the trees outside the walls, somewhere below your great cathedral of St. Paul's. She is now one of the belles of Ghoston; but I often visit the old burial-place, haunting the crypt and vaults of your cathedral, because they are a little nearer to the level of the ground we used to tread a thousand and half a thousand years ago.

Since then, I have seen baby London short-coated, and frocked, and breeched, and jacketed, and bloused, and long-tail-coated. What a muddy, thatched hive—all rushes, and straw, and wood, and ashlar work—there was within the walls, after our Roman time, when the plume of a mounted knight careering in the narrow street, streamed higher than the smoke of the street chimneys! Chimneys? They had no chimneys. And what a plague the town was, soon after its babyhood, for setting fire to itself! Every house, I remember, had its bucket of water ready in case fire broke out, and every ward had its iron crook, its rope, and its two chains, wherewith to drag away from its neighbour anyhouse that might catch fire. Once it pleased the good people, in their dark streets, to make light of the government that ordered every man to hang a lantern out at dusk. They hung out their lanterns as the law ordained, putting no candle inside, because the law had ordained nothing about candle. But, ah me! what a light there was one day, when Nero fetched us up, to see flames two miles long and one mile broad, and smoke spreading fiftymiles, as the fire, starting from Pudding-lane, ran to Pye-corner!

Hadrian, down in our place, the other day, advised me to run up to London as it is, and talk of London as it was: offering me his card of introduction to a Mr. Thomas Wright, upon whom it would be worth my while to call, as he would be able to talk with me pleasantly about old times. Hadrian, also, has shown to me, in his own rooms, a presentation copy of some Illustrations of Roman London, which Mr. Charles Roach Smith, a man well known to us in the Roman set at Ghoston, has just printed for subscribers. On the frontispiece it amused me to see a picture of the bronze head of my friend Hadrian himself, from the great statue of him which used to stand in the old Roman town. They had fished up his head out of the Thames, where penny steam-boats, perhaps, run over his legs and body. Now, I can by no means satisfy myself that you understand why you are informed that between one and two thousand years ago I ate oysters at Rutupia, and, having been ferried

across the oyster-beds, rode on horseback from that stronghold, with its villas and its marble temples, and its amphitheatre, galloping along a famous road over the Downs to Durovernum. If, however, there be a ghost of a reason for my disclosures, possibly it will appear. From that important town of Durovernum, known to the world now as Canterbury, roads branched coastward; but the road I took, was to the north-east, over the high grounds of the forest of Blee, by way of Durobrivæ on the Madus, which you now call Rochester on the Medway, and by the numerous Roman settlements on the bank of the Thames, from your present Southfleet onwards; then, across Shooter's Hill, over Blackheath, through our town of Noviomagus, till I came to the streets and villas of our suburb of London south of the Thames, in your present region of Southwark.

That was not the road taken by Suetonius when, in the time of Nero, your books tell for the first time of London as the place to which that governor of the Britons meant to confine his struggle with the natives. Not far from Aldersgate, when on his way to the town, stationed upon the leafy slopes, and among the rivulets and streams of the region now known to you as Islington, he overthrew the British host under Boadicea, before the site of your Great Northern Railway Station as Battle-bridge. The remains of a camp, supposed to be that of Suetonius, were found some time ago a little northward of the Islington work-house. The Romans had a wood in the rear of their camp, and fought the Britons in the valley of the River Fleet, between the steeps of Pentonville and the high ground about Gray's Inn-lane.

London was then a place not dignified with the name of a colony, but very famous for the number of its merchants and the traffic through it. Rome used to export from London, cattle, hides, and corn, a few of the British dogs, and many British men, prisoners of war, as slaves. Her trading galleys brought to London, household vessels of earthenware and glass for the use of the settlers in the province, works in brass, horse-collars, amber toys, and polished bits of bone. So Strabo says. Being well inland and readily accessible from the frequented seas, it was a capital place whither to bring the odds and ends that Romans in their British villas could not do without, and could not find or make in Britain.

The native Britons had, no doubt, chosen the position of the town for its strength and pleasantness. They found an amphitheatre of rich slopes watered with many streams, and rising from the fishful Thames towards the distant heights now crowned by the spires of Highgate and Hampstead. They saw here a position by the Thames secured to the west by the Fleet River, to the east by the natural moat of Wallbrook and the Wapping marsh beyond, with a wide wild forest sheltering them to the north, and much adjacent marsh to add to their security. So here they raised their huts and cattle-

stalls, fortified themselves with earthwork, tilled the ground, fished in the sparkling river, and drank water from the running brooks. But our Roman London was a great place. There were handsome villas of merchants and others, at the foot of its bridge on the south side of the Thames; and the temples and streets of the town itself were, if I remember rightly, on both sides of Walbrook. Its main street ran, I think, from the bridge northward in the line of what is now called Bishopsgate-street, and a second important street branching from this took the course of the present Watling-street until it left the town at Ludgate. At that western side of Latin London, crowning the hill that looked down upon the stream afterwards called Holbourne, and the River Fleet—upon which ships could row—upon the side of the town also that sloped down to the river, the chief buildings and temples stood. The street ending at Ludgate passed into the high road to West Britain, across Newgate, where there were on each side of the road, tombs of the citizens, and then along the wooded country slope now covered by Fleet-street and the Strand. Money made in London was then spent at Verulamium (St. Albans), a resort of Roman fashion, where there was a handsome theatre.

London, when I, the ghost, visited it in the body and settled in it by reason of marriage with the daughter of Cn: Melo, speculator of the sixth legion, called *Pia fidelis*, was the greatest town in Britain. It was a mile long from Ludgate to the Roman Tower (which stood where you have now another sort of Tower), and it was half a mile across from wall to wall. There was a wall on the river-side in those days, but the river wall fell early into ruin. London-wall was about twelve feet thick, and about thirty high, with a case of rubble and a smooth facing of stone cemented with a concrete, reddened by the use of pounded tile, so that it has been said to have been tempered with the blood of beasts. As the bounds of the town extended, the course of the wall was altered, I believe; but its roots now in the ground seem to show that at last—after my lifetime—it must have run along the east side of Walbrook, along the course of the present Leadenhall-street and Cornhill, taking the line of your Billiter-street and Mark-lane eastward. Bridgegate, Ludgate, Bishopsgate, and Aldgate, were the main gates near the centre of each wall in the irregular square they all enclosed. From Ludgate, the wall crossed the site of the Times printing-office, and diverged thence to St. Andrew's-hill before reaching the river. That the Roman city had been smaller than this, you may be very certain, because Roman dead were not buried inside towns, and remains of Roman cemeteries are under Bow-lane, Moorgate-street, and Bishopsgate Within. There were square towers in the wall, with little chambers hollowed from the middle of their solid substance, furnished with small windows, out of which the watchman could look for the coming of an enemy. Decorated marble buildings had been

raised and had fallen in our Roman London before the great river wall was built, as you may know by the sculptured fragments from the wreck of public buildings which are among the stones found in the substance of its strong foundations. When there was strife and inroad upon cities, there must have been much breakage, more particularly at the beginning and the end of Roman occupation. In labouring at the foundation of the present London-bridge, so many works of art, besides Hadrian's great bronze head, were found in the river-bed, that they seem to have been thrown intentionally over the rail of the old bridge by which London was entered from the south.

Under the stream, deep in the river-bed on either side of London-bridge, and anywhere under the ground within about half a mile from Fish-street-hill—which you may consider to have been in the middle of our Roman London—only dig deep enough and you will find the ornaments we set up in our public haunts, the tessellated floors we trod, strewn with the shoes we wore, the broken fragments of the dishes out of which we ate, the rim of the cup touched by the lips of *Nævia* when I quaffed to her, the ring she gave me when we plighted troth, the toys our little daughter played with before we laid her in that cemetery from which you have dug up so many sacred memorials of love that blossomed sixteen centuries ago. Some of that love is even now in its ripe fruitage.

London to-day is taller by some fifteen feet than London of the Romans. Whatever pierces on the site of the old town fifteen feet, more or less, below the pavements upon which you are now treading—be it sewer, church foundation, or other gash into the soil—it will strike pretty surely upon the streets and pavements of the buried city, and make you, at any rate, possessor of some of the money for which its citizens then toiled, as they toil now for coins with later superscriptions. Filled with a ghostly wrath, let me pause here for a while over the corporation which has so long neglected all opportunities of doing credit to itself in the administration of affairs of London. Here was our bygone world under their feet; they could not help perpetually digging their spades through it, and they would see nothing; they would not even furnish houseroom to the records of the past, in coins and monuments, and all the petty relics of the life of Rome upon the Thames that were forced into their hands whether or not they would take them, and were cast aside! And when a wisely zealous antiquary, Mr. Roach Smith, living within the City, made it his care to inspect every deep cutting for which there arose from time to time occasion, to observe what was brought to light, and to rescue some of the precious memorials of which the ground is full, his visits to the public excavations were at best but tolerated, and usually access was denied him. The fault, however, does not all rest with the corporation. The citizens themselves, in a large meeting, refused the impost of a halfpenny in the pound for a library and a museum. It is

their disgrace that while there hardly is a second-rate or third-rate town in Britain which does not treasure in some building the memorials that enrich and illustrate its history, London, the city of most moment upon earth, and furnishing the grandest of town histories, represents its whole care for its own antiquities in having admitted, not without difficulty, two or three old stones to its Guildhall library, and having given to another stone, houseroom upon the library staircase :—whence it has been carried away nobody knows when or whither, so much care was taken of it. The valuable collection formed in a few years by one much obstructed man, Mr. Roach Smith, is now in the British Museum. The most moderate attention on the part of the City authorities, spread over a few generations, would have produced a City Museum of the Antiquities of London which men would have been glad to travel from afar to study. One of the stones in the City Library is part of a group of three mother goddesses, drawn out of a sewer cutting in Hart-street, Crutched Friars.

In digging the foundation of St. Martin's church at Ludgate, in digging for Goldsmiths' Hall, in digging for the new Royal Exchange, wherever the digging may be within Roman bounds, when it is deep enough discoveries are made. Under the Royal Exchange there was found what proved to be a gravel-pit which had been used as a common dust-hole by the Roman citizens. When the Excise-office was pulled down, six years ago, between Bishopsgate-street and Broad-street, a beautiful mosaic pavement was discovered; Europa, in the middle of it, had been sitting underground for at least sixteen centuries upon her Bull. In the same neighbourhood, a drain sunk in a cellar disclosed part of another pavement that may have belonged to another room in the same villa. In preparing the site for the Hall of Commerce in Threadneedle-street, more pavements were found of Roman planning, under mediæval fragments of the walls of the old Hospital of St. Anthony. Between that part of Threadneedle-street and Cornhill, wherever the ground is tapped, remains of handsome old Roman suburban villas seem to lie. From one hole made in this part of town, there was fished up a female head, life-sized, of coloured stones and glass. The handsomest of the tessellated pavements that have yet been found, lay buried nine feet under the flagstones before the India House in Leadenhall-street. The central part of it, representing Bacchus on the Panther, is preserved in the library of the East India House. A superb mosaic pavement was discovered under Paternoster-row; there was another dug into in Crosby-square; another in Fenchurch-street (of which a whole peacock was uncovered); another in Bartholomew-lane, near the Bank. These were the Turkey carpets of the wealthy Roman; hundreds of them lie buried under the earth and press of traffic, on each side of London-bridge. Fragments of wall painting, important bronzes, statuettes of Apollo, of Harpocrates, and so forth, toy goats and cocks, waterspouts, vase handles and ornaments, lamps, hair-pins,

bracelets, bath scrapers, spindle and distaff of Roman housewives; the pens, the weights, and the steelyards of the men of business; interesting remains of pottery, on which the potters' marks have become, through the study of antiquaries, in their own way as instructive as inscriptions upon coins; and coins which, as records, partake in the dignity of written history, the earth under the feet of modern Londoners already has yielded up.

When the great cuttings for the main drainage of London penetrate more of our mysteries, are there to be no skilled eyes authorised to watch the spade of the navy? Doubtless none. The stray antiquary will be warned off the works, as a weak-minded enthusiast; and on, the men of the spades will go, ignorant of all that they may see, and, as a swarm of white ants marching through the substance of a shelf of records, careless of what they may destroy.

But why should I, contented ghost, wish you men to be inquisitive? I know under which house in Threadneedle-street lie buried the floors on which my Nævia nursed our little one, the threshold over which we carried what was left of her after the spirit fled. I know under whose shop, we paced the garden of our villa when the birds sang over Nævia, sobbing on my breast under the apple-blossoms, and when I looked out with fixed eyes between the tree-stems on the pools that glittered in the broken moorland, upon which our child had frolicked round us on so many sunny days. That is no place to drive a sewer through. Let our old homes lie buried, then; let knowledge go. Respect the stolidness of corporations, and the sentiment of sixteen-hundred-year-old ghosts.

VERY COMMON LAW.

THOUGH not, strictly speaking, a legal consequence of Mr. Blank's matrimonial venture, it was a collateral contingency, urgently advocated by the newly appointed sovereign of his household, that he should take a more commodious house.

He did not quite like the idea himself, and he did not admire the process by which the idea was to be carried out. How could he, indeed? Did not Mrs. Blank wish, in consideration of a ridiculously small rent, to occupy a house which should be nothing less than a domestic paradise, a house whose situation, for example, should be salubrious, whose bedrooms should be numerous and airy, whose reception-room should be spacious and lofty, and whose kitchens should be magnificent temples for the performance of culinary rites? Did not that unreasonable woman insist that hot and cold water should percolate from the basement to the highest attics; and that hall-rooms, and conservatories, and elaborate kitchen ranges, should be the natural attributes of her future home?

Moreover, the house agents with whom Mr. Blank was brought into hourly commotion, did not improve the matter. They were so dreadfully unanimous in styling any enclosed space

with a door to it, which did not happen to be upon the ground floor—for *then* it was an antechamber, or a butler's pantry, as the case might be—a "bedroom."

All this was bad enough, but there was a worse trial still for Blank. Not having an appreciation for the nice points of the law, when once he became involved in the question of lease and agreement, he fairly broke down. "Tell me," he said, having arrived at this crisis, "what are the consequences of a lease, what the effects of an agreement?" Whereupon we let off a dreadful charge of arid law upon the perturbed head of our illustrative man, as follows.

By an Act of Parliament, about the meaning of which many great legal battles have been fought since the twenty-ninth year of the reign of his Majesty King Charles the Second, entitled the Statute of Fraud, and the construction of which no one has been able to determine, every lease which was not in writing and signed by the parties granting it, with the exception of a lease for three years only, was declared to be void at law. So far, the law affecting leases appeared to be sufficiently clear; but what was a lease? The Act of Parliament was delightfully ambiguous on this point; and this point was too good a one to be lost sight of. The legal mind consequently occupied itself in an endeavour to discover whether an instrument—call it a lease, or term it an agreement as you might—signed by the parties in accordance with the requirements of the statute, was in reality a lease, or merely an agreement for a lease. The courts were continually occupied in discussing the question. Unfortunate lessors were ruined, in their endeavours to get at the truth. Unfortunate lessees heaped curses both loud and deep upon the short-comings of a statute which dragged them unwillingly into the Court of Chancery.

At length the matter became so bad, that, according to proverbial philosophy, it must mend. Consequently, some fifteen or sixteen years since, an act was passed which declared that every lease required by law to be in writing (that is, every lease for a period longer than three years) should be void unless made by "deed," and this is the present position of the law.

To bring it home more clearly to Mr. Blank. If that gentleman wish to take a house for no longer a period than three years, he need not incur the expense of a lease, but may safely become a tenant under an agreement containing such conditions as he may approve. If he contemplates a tenancy for more than three years, and has no especial predilection for appearing in Her Majesty's High Court of Chancery, he must by solemn deed, "sealed and delivered," enter into a lease with his landlord. Supposing that he were, from motives of economy, or a natural aversion to parchment, to occupy a house under an agreement, though contemplating a long tenancy, he would, in the eye of the law, be a tenant at will

merely until he had paid his rent. After that, he would be a tenant from year to year, and be liable to be turned out by his landlord at any time after having received the proper notice. On the other hand, having entered into a lease by deed, he would possess an indefeasible estate at law in the premises, and might consider himself as secure as the proverbial uncertainty of the legal element allows any man in his senses to consider himself.

Let us, for our present purpose, suppose that Blank has been wise enough to take his house under lease, and let us, on that supposition, glance at a few of the covenants which would be entered into between himself and his landlord. Many of them are common to both lease and agreement. First of all, there would be the covenant on the part of Mr. Blank to pay rent. Out of this the landlord is bound to deduct the income-tax, under a penalty, and whether the question of the deduction be or be not mentioned in the lease. Then, there would possibly be a covenant from Mr. Blank to pay the rates and taxes. As it has been a question whether this makes the tenant liable to pay sewers-rate, it is advisable to make an exception of this charge, and to throw it upon the landlord. A covenant to pay taxes, by-the-by, will extend to those which may be imposed during the term, as well as those existing at the time the agreement is entered into.

Then would follow a covenant by Mr. Blank "to repair," and as to the wording of which that gentleman cannot be too cautious. If no exception be made in it, for example, as to the destruction of his house by fire, or lightning—which the law appears to consider another element—or tempest, then would it be Blank's duty to repair the same. More: if it were burnt down, and his lease contained no condition to the contrary, he would be obliged to pay rent during the time of its rebuilding. Further still: supposing the landlord to have insured the premises, and Blank to have neglected that precaution, the repair of the house in the event of its destruction by fire, and the absence of any agreement to the contrary, would fall upon Blank's shoulders; his rent would continue payable, and he could not compel the landlord to lay out the insurance money in the rebuilding of the premises. We have Sir John Leach's authority for the latter statement, who laid it down that "there was no principle on which the tenant's situation could be changed by a precaution on the part of the landlord with which the tenant had nothing to do." Lord St. Leonards is of a different opinion, but an opinion, we need not say, is one thing, and "law" another. Addressing the landlord, in his Handybook of Property law, he says: "If, however, you have insured, although not bound to do so, and receive the money, you cannot compel payment of the rent if you decline to lay out the money in rebuilding."

Quite alive to the distinction between opinion and law, the Court of Queen's Bench, in the case referred to, refused to follow the dictum of Lord St. Leonards, and elected to

follow the law. "With regard to the opinion expressed by Lord St. Leonards," said my Lord Campbell, in the case referred to, "his book is a most valuable publication, and I pay respect to it; if it were proposed to make it law, I might be ready to support it, but it is only the opinion of a learned judge, and it is contrary to a solemn decision, and my own opinion."

To go back to the question of repair when damage has resulted from tempest. If the covenant be general, the repair, as we have already said, will fall upon the tenant. Lord Kenyon lays this down very distinctly, in an old case where a person who had entered into a general covenant to repair a bridge, and it was completely destroyed by an unusually high flood, was compelled at his own cost to rebuild the whole structure. "Where a party, by his own contract," said Lord Kenyon, on giving his decision in the case, "creates a duty or charge upon himself, he is bound to make it good if he may, because he might have guarded against it by his contract." So also, in another old case, the same principle of law is extended to a house burnt by lightning, or destroyed by enemies.

True, the law as found in a statute of George the Third's reign, asserts that no action for damages can be brought against any person in whose house a fire shall accidentally begin; but this statute especially exempts express agreements between landlord and tenant, and the general covenant to repair has been held to come within this exception.

Most probably Mr. Blank would discover in his lease that he was prohibited from carrying on particular trades or businesses, or it might be, "noxious trades" only. Let us see how far a few reported cases would guide him as to what trades or business he might or might not indulge in.

In one instance we find when a tenant covenanted not to carry on a trade or business, he was prohibited from keeping a school, which if not a trade was held to be a business, and one, too, which might be productive of great annoyance.

"I own I have no doubt," said my Lord Ellenborough, who delivered judgment in the matter, "that this is a business within the meaning of the covenant, and one which is likely to create as much annoyance as can be predicated of almost any business. It surely cannot be contended," he continued, "that the noise and tumult which sixty boys create, are not a considerable annoyance, as well to the neighbourhood as to the house, from which any landlord may fairly be supposed to be desirous of redeeming his premises; and the exhibition, too, of the boys may be said somewhat to resemble a show of business within the meaning of the covenant."

Though prohibited from keeping a school, however, Mr. Blank might safely either devote his energies to the diminution of madness, or to the safe-keeping of mad people. In other words, he is at liberty, so far as the law has decided the matter, to keep a public-house or a lunatic

asylum, although having covenanted not to carry on an offensive trade. In this instance, where the privilege was accorded to the tenant of keeping a lunatic asylum, he had covenanted not to use or exercise any trade or business of butcher, slaughterman, melter of tallow, tallow-chandler, tobacco-pipe-maker, soap-boiler, or any other offensive trade, and the keeping of a lunatic asylum was deemed not to be a trade. "Every trade," said Lord Denman, "is a business, but every business is not a trade. To answer that description, it must be conducted by buying and selling, which the business of keeping a lunatic asylum is not."

Again: Mr. Blank's lease would, probably, contain a covenant from him not to underlet the premises of which he becomes tenant. This will not prohibit him (let us console him by stating) from taking lodgers, for my Lord Ellenborough has said "that such a covenant can only extend to such underletting as a license might be expected to be applied for, and who ever heard of a license for a landlord to take in a lodger?"

Then, for the landlord's sake, would Mr. Blank's lease contain a power for that gentleman to distrain for rent, supposing Blank to be behindhand in his payment of that inevitably recurring nuisance. We know that the landlord may seize Mr. Blank's household treasures for this purpose, but how much further may he go than that? "Whatever goods and chattels," says no less an authority than Mr. Justice Blackstone, "the landlord finds upon the premises, whether they in fact belong to the tenant or a stranger, are distrainable by him for rent. For otherwise," proceeds the same learned judge, "a door would be open to infinite frauds upon the landlord; and the stranger has his remedy over by action on this case against the tenant, if by the tenant's default the chattels are distrained, so that he cannot render them when called upon."

So far the broad principle of this law; but there are some few exceptions. Let us glance at a few of the more noteworthy of them. The goods of a stranger lying at an inn cannot be seized, provided the inn be used as a temporary lodging. If the stranger be a permanent occupant, we are afraid that his chattels would not be exempt. Again: such of the goods of a stranger as are upon the premises of a gentleman in difficulties and the hands of the bailiff, for the purposes of trade, are exempt from seizure. Cloth at a tailor's, for example; a horse at a farrier's; and, so Mr. Justice Williams has ruled it, books at a bookbinder's. Brewers' casks, however, left at an inn until the contents were consumed, have been held by the Court of Exchequer to be distrainable. "If they had been left," said Lord Abinger, "at a cooper's for repair, the case would have been different." Horses and carriages standing at livery are not exempt, as witness what Lord Truro has said upon the subject.

"The question in all these cases," said that learned judge, "is, whether the goods are placed

in the hands of the tenant, merely with the intent that they shall remain on the premises, or with a view of having labour and skill bestowed upon them." In the former case, he goes on to say, they are not privileged; in the latter they are; and as the primary intent of sending a horse to livery, is, that it should remain on the premises, it is distrainable. Such wearing apparel as is not in actual use is distrainable; but, as my Lord Kenyon has decided that a landlord could seize the clothes of his tenant's wife and children while they were in bed or being washed, Blank would have to sleep in his boots should he and his landlord ever arrive at the question of distraint, and he be anxious to preserve those articles of apparel.

One more precautionary warning to Mr. Blank. He must be careful to see that the house which he and Mrs. B. select as their residence, is in a good, habitable condition, before he commits himself to the signing either of lease or agreement. In one instance in the books, a gentleman having taken a house for three years, vacated it the day after he had taken possession, and refused again to occupy it. The reason given for this summary evacuation was, as stated in his plea, "that the house was not in a reasonable, fit, and proper state or condition for habitation or dwelling therein, by reason of the same being greatly infested, swarmed, and overrun with noxious, stinking, and nasty insects called bugs." Notwithstanding this unhappy condition of the premises, the court decided that the gentleman should pay the rent according to his agreement: stating, that when an unfurnished house was let, "there was no contract implied by law that it was, at the time of the demise or should be at the commencement of the term, in a reasonable, fit, and proper condition for habitation." "When parties," said Lord Wensleydale, in delivering the judgment of the court, "mean that a lease is to be void on account of unfitness of the premises for the subject for which they are intended to be used, they should express their meaning."

As a general rule, whatever is annexed to the soil of land belonging to another man, becomes the property of the owner of the soil. But, the law will allow Mr. Blank to remove any chattels he has put up in his house and premises, which can be taken away without damaging the freehold. As, for example, bookcases, ornamental chimney-pieces, window-blinds, grates, stoves, coffee-mills, jacks, clock-cases, ovens, and many other things too numerous to mention. If, however, he should have built a conservatory upon a brick foundation, and communicating with rooms in the house, the law will not permit him to remove that. Nor can he (unless he be a market gardener or nurseryman: in either of which cases they would be deemed trade fixtures) carry off his favourite flowers from the garden.

The law is rather uncertain as to the time during which a tenant may remove fixtures. According to the old authorities, he was obliged to remove them during the term, but latterly it

appears to be a recognised principle of law that this may be done after the term if he have not quitted possession: always provided that such possession be lawful. In a recent case, a tenant having held over beyond his term, and not removed his fixtures, the landlord let the premises to a new tenant. The new tenant entered into possession, and would not allow the fixtures to be removed, and the question coming before the court, he was held to be quite justified in so doing.

ROBERT BLAKE,

GENERAL-AT-SEA.

OUR Happy Warrior! of a race
To whom are richly given
Great glory and peculiar grace
Because in league with Heaven.
Not that the mortal course they trod
Was free from briar and thorn;
Who bears the arrow mark of God,
Must first the wound have borne.
O like a Sailor Saint was he,
Our Sea-king! grave and sweet
In temper after victory,
Or cheerful in defeat;
And men would leave their quiet home
To follow in his wake,
And fight in fire, or float in foam,
For love of Robert Blake.
Like that drumhead of Zitska's skin,
Thrills his heroic name,
And how the salt-sea-sparkle in
Us, flashes at his fame!
His picture in our hearts' best books
Still keeps its pride of place,
From which a noble spirit looks
With an unfading face;
A face as of an Angel, who
Might live his Boyhood here!
And yet how deadly grand it grew,
When Wrong drew darkening near.
All ridged, and ready trench'd for war,
The fair frank brow was bent.
Then flash'd like sudden scimitar,
The lion lineament.
Behold him, with his gallant band,
On leagured Lyme's red beach,
Shoulder to shoulder, see them stand,
At Taunton in the breach.
Safe through the battle shocks he went,
With sword-sweep stern and wide;
Strode the grim heaps as Death had lent
Him his White Horse to ride.
"Give in! our toils you cannot break;
The Lion is in the net!
Famine fights for us." "No," said Blake,
"My boots I have not ate."
He smiled across the bitter cup;
He gripped his good Sword-heft:
"I should not dream of giving up
While such a meal is left."
Where trumpets blow and streamers flow,
Behold him, calm and proud,
Bear down upon his bravest foe,
A bursting thunder-cloud.
Foremost of all the host that strove
To crowd Death's open door,
In giant mood his way he clove,
The Man to go before.

And though the battle lightning blazed,
 The thunders roar and roll,
 He to Immortal Beauty raised,
 A statue with his soul.
 And never did the Greeks of old
 Mirror in marble rare
 A Wrestler of so fine a mould,
 An Athlete half so fair.
 Homeward the dying Sea-king turns
 From his last famous fight,
 For England's dear green hills he yearns
 At heart, and strains his sight.
 The old cliffs loom out grey and grand,
 The old War-ship glides on,
 With one last wave life tries to land,
 Falls seaward, and is gone.
 With that last leap to touch the coast,
 He passed into his rest,
 And Blake's unwearied arms were crossed
 Upon his martial breast.
 And while our England waits, and twines
 For him her latest wreath,
 His is a crown of stars that shines
 From out the dusk of death.
 For him no pleasant age of ease,
 To wear what youth could win,
 For him no children round his knees,
 To get his harvest in.
 But with a soul serene, he takes
 Whatever lot may come;
 And such a life of labour makes
 A glorious going home.
 Famous old Trueheart, dead and gone,
 Long shall his glory grow,
 Who never turned his back upon
 A friend, nor face from foe.
 He made them fear old England's name
 Wherever it was heard,
 He put her proudest foes to shame,
 For God smiled on his Sword.
 Till she forget her old sea-fame,
 Shall England honour him,
 And keep the grave-dust from his name,
 Till her old eyes be dim.
 And long as free waves folding round,
 Brimful with blessing break,
 At heart she holds him, calm and crowned,
 Immortal Robert Blake.

THE UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

It is the confession that I have often travelled from this Covent Garden lodging of mine on Sundays, should give offence to those who never travel on Sundays, they will be satisfied (I hope) by my adding that the journeys in question were made to churches.

Not that I have any curiosity to hear powerful preachers. Time was, when I was dragged by the hair of my head, as one may say, to hear too many. On summer evenings, when every flower, and tree, and bird, might have better addressed my soft young heart, I have in my day been caught in the palm of a female hand by the crown, have been violently scrubbed from the neck to the roots of the hair as a purification for the Temple, and have then been carried off highly charged with saponaceous electricity, to be

steamed like a potato in the unventilated breath of the powerful Boanerges Boiler and his congregation, until what small mind I had was quite steamed out of me. In which pitiable plight I have been hauled out of the place of meeting, at the conclusion of the exercises, and catechised respecting Boanerges Boiler, his fifthly, his sixthly, and his seventhly, until I have regarded that reverend person in the light of a most dismal and oppressive Charade. Time was, when I was carried off to platform assemblages at which no human child, whether of wrath or grace, could possibly keep its eyes open, and when I felt the fatal sleep stealing, stealing over me, and when I gradually heard the orator in possession, spinning and humming like a great top, until he rolled, collapsed, and tumbled over, and I discovered to my burning shame and fear, that as to that last stage it was not he, but I. I have sat under Boanerges when he has specifically addressed himself to us—us, the infants—and at this present writing I hear his lumbering jocularity (which never amused us, though we basely pretended that it did), and I behold his big round face, and I look up the inside of his outstretched coat-sleeve as if it were a telescope with the stopper on, and I hate him with an unwholesome hatred for two hours. Through such means did it come to pass that I knew the powerful preacher from beginning to end, all over and all through, while I was very young, and that I left him behind at an early period of life. Peace be with him! More peace than he brought to me!

Now, I have heard many preachers since that time—not powerful; merely Christian, unaffected, and reverential—and I have had many such preachers on my roll of friends. But, it was not to hear these, any more than the powerful class, that I made my Sunday journeys. They were journeys of curiosity to the numerous churches in the City of London. It came into my head one day, here had I been cultivating a familiarity with all the churches of Rome, and I knew nothing of the insides of the old churches of London! This befel on a Sunday morning. I began my expeditions that very same day, and they lasted me a year.

I never wanted to know the names of the churches to which I went, and to this hour I am profoundly ignorant in that particular of at least nine-tenths of them. Indeed, saving that I know the church of old GOWER's tomb (he lies in effigy with his head upon his books) to be the church of Saint Saviour's, Southwark, and the church of MILTON's tomb to be the church of Cripplegate, and the church on Cornhill with the great golden keys to be the church of Saint Peter, I doubt if I could pass a competitive examination in any of the names. No question did I ever ask of living creature concerning these churches, and no answer to any anti-quarian question on the subject that I ever put to books, shall harass the reader's soul. A full half of my pleasure in them, arose out of their mystery; mysterious I found them; mysterious they shall remain for me.

Where shall I begin my round of hidden and forgotten old churches in the City of London?

It is twenty minutes short of eleven on a Sunday morning, when I stroll down one of the many narrow hilly streets in the City that tend due south to the Thames. It is my first experiment, and I have come to the region of Whittington in an omnibus, and we have put down a fierce-eyed spare old woman, whose slate-coloured gown smells of herbs, and who walked up Aldersgate-street to some chapel where she comforts herself with brimstone doctrine, I warrant. We have also put down a stouter and sweeter old lady, with a pretty large prayer-book in an unfolded pocket-handkerchief, who got out at the corner of a court near Stationers' Hall, and who I think must go to church there, because she is the widow of some deceased Old Company's Beadle. The rest of our freight were mere chance pleasure-seekers and rural walkers, and went on to the Blackwall railway. So many bells are ringing, when I stand undecided at a street corner, that every sheep in the ecclesiastical fold might be a bell-wether. The discordance is fearful. My state of indecision is referable to, and about equally divisible among, four great churches, which are all within sight and sound, all within the space of a few square yards. As I stand at the street corner, I don't see as many as four people at once going to church, though I see as many as four churches with their steeples clamouring for people. I choose my church, and go up the flight of steps to the great entrance in the tower. A mouldy tower within, and like a neglected washhouse. A rope comes through the beamed roof, and a man in a corner pulls it and clashes the bell; a whitey-brown man, whose clothes were once black; a man with flue on him, and cobweb. He stares at me, wondering how I come there, and I stare at him, wondering how he comes there. Through a screen of wood and glass, I peep into the dim church. About twenty people are discernible, waiting to begin. Christening would seem to have faded out of this church long ago, for the font has the dust of desuetude thick upon it, and its wooden cover (shaped like an old-fashioned tureen cover) looks as if it wouldn't come off, upon requirement. I perceive the altar to be rickety, and the Commandments damp. Entering after this survey, I jostle the clergyman, who is entering too from a dark lane behind a pew of state with curtains, where nobody sits. The pew is ornamented with four blue wands, once carried by four somebodies, I suppose, before somebody else, but which there is nobody now to hold or receive honour from. I open the door of a family pew, and shut myself in; if I could occupy twenty family pews at once, I might have them. The clerk, a brisk young man (how does *he* come here?), glances at me knowingly, as who should say, "You have done it now; you must stop." Organ plays. Organ-loft is in a small gallery across the church; gallery congregation, two girls. I wonder within myself what will happen when we are required to sing:

There is a pale heap of books in the corner of my pew, and while the organ, which is hoarse and sleepy, plays in such fashion that I can hear more of the rusty working of the stops than of any music, I look at the books, which are mostly bound in faded baize and stuff. They belonged, in 1754, to the Dowgate family; and who were they? Jane Comport must have married Young Dowgate, and come into the family that way; Young Dowgate was courting Jane Comport when he gave her her prayer-book, and recorded the presentation in the fly-leaf; if Jane were fond of Young Dowgate, why did she die and leave the book here? Perhaps at the rickety altar, and before the damp Commandments, she, Comport, had taken him, Dowgate, in a flush of youthful hope and joy, and perhaps it had not turned out in the long run as great a success as was expected?

The opening of the service recalls my wandering thoughts. I then find, to my astonishment, that I have been, and still am, taking a strong kind of invisible snuff, up my nose, into my eyes, and down my throat. I wink, sneeze, and cough. The clerk sneezes; the clergyman winks; the unseen organist sneezes and coughs (and probably winks); all our little party wink, sneeze, and cough. The snuff seems to be made of the decay of matting, wood, cloth, stone, iron, earth, and something else. Is the something else, the decay of dead citizens in the vaults below? As sure as Death it is! Not only in the cold damp February day, do we cough and sneeze dead citizens all through the service, but dead citizens have got into the very bellows of the organ, and half choked the same. We stamp our feet, to warm them, and dead citizens arise in heavy clouds. Dead citizens stick upon the walls, and lie pulverised on the sounding-board over the clergyman's head, and, when a gust of air comes, tumble down upon him.

In this first experience I was so nauseated by too much snuff, made of the Dowgate family, the Comport branch, and other families and branches, that I gave but little heed to our dull manner of ambling through the service; to the brisk clerk's manner of encouraging us to try a note or two at psalm time; to the gallery-congregation's manner of enjoying a shrill duet, without a notion of time or tune; to the whitey-brown man's manner of shutting the minister into the pulpit, and being very particular with the lock of the door, as if he were a dangerous animal. But, I tried again next Sunday, and soon accustomed myself to the dead citizens when I found that I could not possibly get on without them among the City churches.

Another Sunday. After being again rung for by conflicting bells, like a leg of mutton or a laced hat a hundred years ago, I make selection of a church oddly put away in a corner among a number of lanes—a smaller church than the last, and an ugly: of about the date of Queen Anne. As a congregation, we are fourteen strong: not counting an exhausted charity school in a gallery, which has dwindled away to four boys, and two girls. In the porch, is a benefac-

tion of loaves of bread, which there would seem to be nobody left in the exhausted congregation to claim, and which I saw an exhausted beadle, long faded out of uniform, eating with his eyes for self and family when I passed in. There is also an exhausted clerk in a brown wig, and two or three exhausted doors and windows have been bricked up, and the service books are musty, and the pulpit cushions are threadbare, and the whole of the church furniture is in a very advanced stage of exhaustion. We are three old women (habitual), two young lovers (accidental), two tradesmen, one with a wife and one alone, an aunt and nephew, again two girls (these two girls dressed out for church with everything about them limp that should be stiff, and *vice versa*, are an invariable experience), and three sniggering boys. The clergyman is, perhaps, the chaplain of a civic company; he has the moist and vinous look, and eke the bulbous boots, of one acquainted with 'Twenty port, and comet vintages.

We are so quiet in our dulness that the three sniggering boys, who have got away into a corner by the altar-railing, give us a start, like crackers, whenever they laugh. And this reminds me of my own village church where, during sermon-time on bright Sundays when the birds are very musical indeed, farmers' boys patter out over the stone pavement, and the clerk steps out from his desk after them, and is distinctly heard in the summer repose to pursue and punch them in the churchyard, and is seen to return with a meditative countenance, making believe that nothing of the sort has happened. The aunt and nephew in this City church are much disturbed by the sniggering boys. The nephew is himself a boy, and the sniggerers tempt him to secular thoughts of marbles and string, by secretly offering such commodities to his distant contemplation. This young Saint Anthony for a while resists, but presently becomes a backslider, and in dumb show defies the sniggerers to "heave" a marble or two in his direction. Herein he is detected by the aunt (a rigorous reduced gentlewoman who has the charge of offices), and I perceive that worthy relative to poke him in the side, with the corrugated hooked handle of an ancient umbrella. The nephew revenges himself for this, by holding his breath and terrifying his kinswoman with the dread belief that he has made up his mind to burst. Regardless of whispers and shakes, he swells and becomes discoloured, and yet again swells and becomes discoloured, until the aunt can bear it no longer, but leads him out, with no visible neck, and with his eyes going before him like a prawn's. This causes the sniggerers to regard flight as an eligible move, and I know which of them will go out first, because of the over-devout attention that he suddenly concentrates on the clergyman. In a little while, this hypocrite, with an elaborate demonstration of hushing his footsteps, and with a face generally expressive of having until now forgotten a religious appointment elsewhere, is gone. Number two gets out in the

same way, but rather quicker. Number three getting safely to the door, there turns reckless, and banging it open, flies forth with a Whoop! that vibrates to the top of the tower above us.

The clergyman, who is of a prandial presence and a muffled voice, may be scant of hearing as well as of breath, but he only glances up, as having an idea that somebody has said Amen in a wrong place, and continues his steady jog-trot, like a farmer's wife going to market. He does all he has to do, in the same easy way, and gives us a concise sermon, still like the jog-trot of the farmer's wife on a level road. Its drowsy cadence soon lulls the three old women asleep, and the unmarried tradesman sits looking out at window, and the married tradesman sits looking at his wife's bonnet, and the lovers sit looking at one another, so superlatively happy, that I mind when I, turned of eighteen, went with my Angelica to a City church on account of a shower (by this special coincidence that it was in Huggin-lane), and when I said to my Angelica, "Let the blessed event, Angelica, occur at no altar but this!" and when my Angelica consented that it should occur at no other—which it certainly never did, for it never occurred anywhere. And O, Angelica, what has become of you, this present Sunday morning when I can't attend to the sermon; and, more difficult question than that, what has become of Me as I was when I sat by your side!

But we receive the signal to make that unanimous dive which surely is a little conventional—like the strange rustlings and settlements and clearings of throats and noses, which are never dispensed with, at certain points of the Church service, and are never held to be necessary under any other circumstances. In a minute more it is all over, and the organ expresses itself to be as glad of it as it can be of anything in its rheumatic state, and in another minute we are all of us out of the church, and Whity-brown has locked it up. Another minute or little more, and, in the neighbouring churchyard—not the yard of that church, but of another—a churchyard like a great shabby old mignonette-box, with two trees in it and one tomb—I meet Whity-brown, in his private capacity, fetching a pint of beer for his dinner from the public-house in the corner, where the keys of the rotting fire-ladders are kept and were never asked for, and where there is a ragged, white-seamed, out-at-elbowed bagatelle-board on the first floor.

In one of these City churches, and only in one, I found an individual who might have been claimed as expressly a City personage. I remember the church, by the feature that the clergyman couldn't get to his own desk without going through the clerk's, or couldn't get to the pulpit without going through the reading-desk—I forget which, and it's no matter—and by the presence of this personage among the exceedingly sparse congregation. I doubt if we were a dozen, and we had no exhausted charity school to help us out. The personage was dressed in black of square cut, and was stricken in years, and wore a black velvet cap, and cloth

shoes. He was of a staid, wealthy, and dissatisfied aspect. In his hand, he conducted to church a mysterious child: a child of the feminine gender. The child had a beaver hat, with a stiff drab plume that surely never belonged to any bird of the air. The child was further attired in a nankeen frock and spencer, brown boxing-gloves, and a veil. It had a bluish, in the nature of currant jelly, on its chin; and was a thirsty child. Inasmuch that the personage carried in his pocket a green bottle, from which, when the first psalm was given out, the child was openly refreshed. At all other times throughout the service it was motionless, and stood on the seat of the large pew, closely fitted into the corner, like a rain-water pipe.

The personage never opened his book, and never looked at the clergyman. He never sat down either, but stood with his arms leaning on the top of the pew, and his forehead sometimes shaded with his right hand, always looking at the church door. It was a long church for a church of its size, and he was at the upper end, but he always looked at the door. That he was an old bookkeeper, or an old trader who had kept his own books, and that he might be seen at the Bank of England about Dividend times, no doubt. That he had lived in the City all his life and was disdainful of other localities, no doubt. Why he looked at the door, I never absolutely proved, but it is my belief that he lived in expectation of the time when the citizens would come back to live in the City, and its ancient glories would be renewed. He appeared to expect that this would occur on a Sunday, and that the wanderers would first appear in the deserted churches, penitent and humbled. Hence, he looked at the door which they never darkened. Whose child the child was, whether the child of a disinherited daughter, or some parish orphan whom the personage had adopted, there was nothing to lead up to. It never played, or skipped, or smiled. Once, the idea occurred to me that it was an automaton, and that the personage had made it; but following the strange couple out one Sunday, I heard the personage say to it, "Thirteen thousand pounds;" to which it added, in a weak human voice, "Seventeen and fourpence." Four Sundays I followed them out, and this is all I ever heard or saw them say. One Sunday, I followed them home. They lived behind a pump, and the personage opened their abode with an exceeding large key. The one solitary inscription on their house related to a fire-plug. The house was partly undermined by a deserted and closed gateway; its windows were blind with dirt; and it stood with its face disconsolately turned to a wall. Five great churches and two small ones rang their Sunday bells between this house and the church the couple frequented, so they must have had some special reason for going a quarter of a mile to it. The last time I saw them, was on this wise. I had been to explore another church at a distance, and happened to pass the church they frequented, at about two

of the afternoon when that edifice was closed. But, a little aside-door, which I had never observed before, stood open, and disclosed certain cellarous steps. Methought, "They are airing the vaults to-day," when the personage and the child silently arrived at the steps, and silently descended. Of course, I came to the conclusion that the personage had at last despaired of the looked-for return of the penitent citizens, and that he and the child went down to get themselves buried.

In the course of my pilgrimages I came upon one obscure church which had broken out in the melodramatic style, and was got up with various tawdry decorations, much after the manner of the extinct London maypoles. These attractions had induced several young priests or deacons in black bibs for waistcoats, and several young ladies interested in that holy order (the proportion being, as I estimated, seventeen young ladies to a deacon), to come into the City as a new and odd excitement. It was wonderful to see how these young people played out their little play in the heart of the City, all among themselves, without the deserted City's knowing anything about it. It was as if you should take an empty counting-house on a Sunday, and set one of the old Mysteries there. They had impressed a small school (from what neighbourhood I don't know) to assist in the performances, and it was pleasant to notice frantic garlands of inscription on the walls, especially addressing those poor innocents in characters impossible for them to decipher. There was a remarkably agreeable smell of pomatum in this congregation.

But, in other cases, rot and mildew and dead citizens formed the uppermost scent, while, infused into it in a dreamy way not at all displeasing, was the staple character of the neighbourhood. In the churches about Mark-lane, for example, there was a dry whiff of wheat; and I accidentally struck an airy sample of barley out of an aged hassock in one of them. From Rood-lane to Tower-street, and thereabouts, there was often a subtle flavour of wine: sometimes, of tea. One church near Mincing-lane smelt like a druggist's drawer. Behind the Monument, the service had a flavour of damaged oranges, which, a little further down towards the river, tempered into herrings, and gradually toned into a cosmopolitan blast of fish. In one church, the exact counterpart of the church in the Rake's Progress where the hero is being married to the horrible old lady, there was no speciality of atmosphere, until the organ shook a perfume of hides all over us from some adjacent warehouse.

Be the scent what it would, however, there was no speciality in the people. There were never enough of them to represent any calling or neighbourhood. They had all gone elsewhere over-night, and the few stragglers in the many churches languished there inexpressively.

Among the uncommercial travels in which I have engaged, this year of Sunday travel occupies its own place, apart from all the rest. Whether I think of the church where the sails of the

oyster-boats in the river almost flapped against the windows, or of the church where the railroad made the bells hum as the train rushed by above the roof, I recollect a curious experience. On summer Sundays, in the gentle rain or the bright sunshine—either, deepening the idleness of the idle City—I have sat, in that singular silence which belongs to resting-places usually astir, in scores of buildings at the heart of the world's metropolis, unknown to far greater numbers of people speaking the English tongue, than the ancient edifices of the Eternal City, or the Pyramids of Egypt. The dark vestries and registries into which I have peeped, and the little hemmed-in churchyards that have echoed to my feet, have left impressions on my memory as distinct and quaint as any it has in that way received. In all these dusty registers that the worms are eating, there is not a line but made some hearts leap, or some tears flow, in their day. Still and dry now, still and dry! and the old tree at the window with no room for its branches, has seen them all out. So with the tomb of the old Master of the old Company, on which it drips. His son restored it and died, his daughter restored it and died, and then he had been remembered long enough, and the tree took possession of him, and his name cracked out.

There are few more striking indications of the changes of manners and customs that two or three hundred years have brought about, than these deserted Churches. Many of them are handsome and costly structures, several of them were designed by WREN, many of them arose from the ashes of the great fire, others of them outlived the plague and the fire too, to die a slow death in these later days. No one can be sure of the coming time; but it is not too much to say of it that it has no sign in its outsetting tides, of the reflux to these churches of their congregations and uses. They remain, like the tombs of the old citizens who lie beneath them and around them, Monuments of another age. They are worth a Sunday-exploration now and then, for they yet echo, not unharmoniously, to the time when the city of London really was London; when the 'Prentices and Trained Bands were of mark in the state; when even the Lord Mayor himself was a Reality—not a Fiction conventionally be-puffed on one day in the year by illustrious friends, who no less conventionally laugh at him on the remaining three hundred and sixty-four days.

THIRTY-TWO DUELS.

ONE Sunday morning (so we learn from a careful perusal of the biography of Jean Gigon, as related by Antoine Gandon), a pair of gendarmes (who always hunt in couples) were returning from an official round, by an anonymous highway in the south of France, towards an anonymous small town, when they heard pitiful sounds proceeding from a ditch. The utterer of the plaintive cries turned out to be a fine baby boy, some six months old, wrapped in a scrap of

coarse blanketing. There was not the slightest material token left by which the foundling could hereafter be identified. As this is not a melodramatic sketch, it may be as well to state that he never was identified. The humane gendarmes carried the infant to their anonymous mayor, offering to stand godfathers to the little stranger. The brigadier of this patrol was named Jean; his subordinate, Gigon: therefore the new-come citizen was inscribed on the registers as "Jean Gigon, born of unknown father and mother, and found on the highway, the 15th of September, 1800." In default of any future claim (which was never preferred), this simple ceremony converted the probable offspring of some vagabond gipsy into an additional French subject—a welcome present, considering that, at that time of day, there was a tolerable consumption of the article.

Good Gendarme Gigon did more; he took the infant home, and with his wife's willing and hearty consent, brought him up as his own child, treating him in every way on the same footing as his own little infant daughter Marie. On inspection, the babe was found to have a blue mark, apparently tattooed, on his left temple, resembling a flash of lightning, if it resembled anything. The mayor added to the register a note, "Private mark: a little blue thunderbolt on the left temple"—which he might as well have let alone. The infant never discovered his parents, nor his parents him. But French law was satisfied. Two years afterwards, Gendarme Gigon retired on a pension; and his wife came into the unexpected inheritance of a farm, called Les Vieux Chênes, or The Old Oaks, and of vineyards, which placed them quite in easy circumstances. The foundling's education received all the benefit of the change.

And now comes the ill-mended flaw in the story, which puts the candid reader in search of truth completely at fault, just as an earthquake would throw out the miner who was tracing through the rock a rich vein of precious metal. The biographer's materials were supplied by Jean Gigon, the foundling, himself; he could, therefore, only know what Jean Gigon chose to tell of this part of his history. The real facts appear to be, that Jean, a spoiled child, had been presented with a gun (in reward for good conduct and advancement in his studies), and was very fond of rabbit-shooting, in which he was habitually accompanied by his foster-sister, little Marie, otherwise called Gignonnette, who acted the part of both beater and retriever; that on one of these expeditions Marie disappeared (Jean says she was suddenly kidnapped by a man on horseback); that Marie's mother accused him, the foundling, of having killed her child, intentionally or accidentally; that she lost her reason in consequence, and never recovered it, but died insane; and that Jean naturally took his departure from his foster-parents' house the very evening of the catastrophe, and engaged himself as shepherd's boy in the adjacent Pyrenees. We meet with a phantom of Marie

by-and-by, but she looks like a very false phantom indeed.

Next came the conscription, that grand turning-point in a Frenchman's life. Jean, having drawn Number One—the inexorable sentence to military service—judged it expedient to join the ranks of the *Chasseurs des Alpes* at once, without waiting for further formalities. Chronologically, this ought to bring us to the year 1821. His squadron was commanded by a captain whose temper had been soured by disappointment and retarded promotion, and to whom he was presented, with other conscripts, on the day of his arrival. The new comers were drawn up in a row, and the terrible captain commenced his inspection by the recruit to the right, Jean Gigon being the third in the rank.

"How did you enter the service?" he abruptly inquired of conscript the first.

"Monsieur——," replied the novice, trembling at his officer's bristling moustaches.

"Call me Captain."

"Captain, I entered as a volunteer."

"Ah! Good! An idle fellow! A disgrace to his family! A good-for-nothing scamp! Let's try another. And you?" he said, addressing the next.

"Substitute, captain."

"Better and better," rejoined the irascible officer. "You took your father's pig to market. A capital trade! And you, young man?" he said, addressing Jean Gigon.

"I drew Number One, captain; and I did not wait to be called out."

"Admirable! A soldier because you could not help it! A very pretty little addition to my squadron!"

"But, captain, did you enter the service by the operation of the Holy Spirit, since you do not care to have either volunteers, nor substitutes, nor compulsory conscripts?"

The captain, stupefied at an answer, which he now heard for the first time in his life, stared Jean Gigon full in the face, and strutted away without deigning to continue the inspection, but also without any thought of punishing Jean Gigon's audacity.

Thus began his military career, in which, in France, a duel is always a probable incident. His first was the result of an unintentional pun or double-meaning. In every regiment in France, and probably in the world—exactly as amongst the population of London—there is sure to be current some word or phrase that is dragged in and applied to every occasion. When Jean Gigon entered the 17th Cavalry *Chasseurs*, the monomania of the regiment was to pronounce, at every possible moment, the interjection "*Hélas!*" or *Alas*, the *h* not being aspirated.

One winter's evening, Jean Gigon took part in a game of *quadrante*, which is a sort of four-handed *écarté*, only the king does not reckon for a point. He takes the other cards, and that is all. After him come the queen, the knave, the ace, the ten, the nine, the eight, and the seven. Gigon's partner was an old soldier who pretended not to have his equal at cards in the regiment.

"Don't show your hand," said the old moustache. "How many trumps have you, Jean Gigon?"

"The king, *hélas!*"

"Very well; play the king of trumps. The trick is ours," said the veteran, exultingly.

"And now, my lad, play your ace."

"I haven't got an ace."

"Not got the ace of trumps?"

"No, old fellow, certainly not."

"Pray are you making game of me, young man? When I had the honour of asking you how many trumps you had, why did you answer, 'The king, et l'as?' (and the ace)—pronounced exactly like '*hélas!*'"

"I did not say, 'I have the king together with the ace;' I said, 'I have the king, *hélas!*' The men say '*alas!*' on every occasion. No' thing else is to be heard in the regiment ever since I have been in it."

"Ah! Yes; ever since you have been in it, *jeune blaireau*" (young badger). "*Hélas!*"

"I can tell you, *vieux renard*" (old fox), "you are not going to pluck my geese. You also, you see, can pronounce the word '*hélas!*' very stupidly."

"Ah! I talk stupidly, young man, do I? Take that."

The angry professor of *quadrante* threw the cards he held in Jean Gigon's face, who replied by throwing the whole pack in a lump at his partner's head. The partner, forgetting the forbearance due to a novice, struck him, before their comrades could interpose. The consequence was inevitable. The interjection '*hélas!*' was the cause of Jean Gigon's first duel.

On the ground, he surprised his adversary by a new mode of fence. Instead of the usual parry and thrust, he flourished his sabre round and round like a mill, till he drove his antagonist with his back to a wall, after making him drop his weapon. Then preparing to return with his fist the blow received, he first inquired, "Am I a badger? Am I a badger?"

"No," answered the patient, faintly.

"Really and truly?" insisted Jean Gigon.

"Word of honour: but let me go."

"*Hélas!*" said the provost, who witnessed the duel. "If the young ones are going to lead the old ones such a dance as this, it is all up with the regiment. Meanwhile, let us go and eat our soup before it gets cold. *Hélas!*"

We are next treated to a recognition, at *Portugalette*, of the long-lost Marie, under the guise of a Spanish dancer, "the lovely, the celebrated *Emparoz*." Jean Gigon, exclaiming "*'Tis Gignonnette!*" fainted when she appeared on the stage. *Gignonnette*, threatening to become a nickname, was the cause of the second duel, in which he simply shaved off his adversary's left ear, without doing him further harm. Of Marie *Emparoz* we will say no more than that, first, she and her handsome husband, "*Pedro mio*," are far from novelties in literature; and secondly, that the idea never seems to have occurred to her (an only child) of going home to claim her inheritance of the estate of Old Oaks, or to see

whether her parents were living or dead. Marie Emparoz, alas! resembles the baseless fabric of a vision.

Jean Gigon rose to the rank of brigadier, and manifested a decided partiality for the bottle. Five more duels followed, because the other brigadiers would persist in calling him Gignonette. The brigadiers were punished, and Jean was degraded to the ranks for his excessive sensibility. Nevertheless, strict orders were given that the offensive name should not be repeated; but a short speech which Jean Gigon made, one day when he was not in liquor, had more effect than all the injunctions of the commanding officers.

"Now that I am reduced to the ranks," he said to his messmates, "I give you notice that whoever calls me Gignonette is a coward, and that instead of slicing off his ears, I will kill him. I have no stripes on my sleeve to lose now, so you may reckon on my being as good as my word."

The rank was recovered, and lost, and recovered again. The attractions of drink did not wax feeble. More duels were fought, for various degrees of provocation. It was a heavy offence if any one pronounced his name so as to make it sound like Gigot, or Leg-of-Mutton. He thus got as far as twenty-seven single combats. At the twenty-eighth, he executed what is called the "coup de banderolle," which consists in slashing your adversary diagonally, from the right shoulder to the left hip. And so on; till the scene is shifted to Africa.

A certain amount of good service is performed; but there is no cessation of occasional encounters up to the thirty-first, which was unavoidable with a crazy Corsican. At the beginning of the rainy season of 1840, our duellist (still no higher than brigadier) met with the final catastrophe destined by fate. He was on stable-duty for the week; and after the horses had received their evening attendance, he went, with several of his comrades, to a public-house kept by an ex-cantinière of the army, at the sign of The Stuffed Jackal. A corporal of the Foreign Legion happened to be standing before the counter, on which he had just set down a glass, half-filled with water and syrup of gum. For the first and the last time in his life, Jean Gigon picked a quarrel.

"Tiens!" he said, as he entered the public room, and saw the corporal standing by himself, "do you drink all alone by yourselves in your regiment?"

"My dear colleague," replied the corporal, "nothing will give me greater pleasure than to touch glasses with you. But when I entered for a little refreshment (for I have just left the Dey's Hospital) there was not a single comrade here, and I asked, as you see, for a glass of syrup. I shall not get very jolly with that."

It was impossible to make a more proper reply: but Jean Gigon's lot was to be fulfilled. "No matter," he said; "a French soldier ought not to drink alone. He should invite the first person who comes." And before the cor-

poral could guess his intention, he snatched the glass standing on the counter, and dashed its contents on the floor. This mad action had scarcely been committed before the corporal gave Jean Gigon a sound slap in the face. His companions rushed between the two adversaries, and had no difficulty in making Jean Gigon understand—for he was a good-hearted fellow at bottom—how blamable his conduct was under the circumstances. He acknowledged that he was in the wrong. The corporal bravely offered to give a reparation with arms, if it were required; but the other brigadiers who were present at this deplorable scene refused to allow it, since he had been insulted the first, without any reason. They shook hands, and the corporal took his departure in the direction of Mustapha.

By ill luck, the dispute came to the knowledge of the quartermaster of the squadron, who had lately arrived from France, by exchange; that is, he was unacquainted with the manners of the army of Africa, where duels were extremely rare; for, in the face of such an enemy, men looked twice before they fought with a comrade who, the very next day, might have an opportunity of saving their life. But when the quartermaster heard that a brigadier of his squadron had received a blow from a corporal of the Foreign Legion, he sent for Jean Gigon, and, refusing to hear the witnesses of the altercation, he violently reproached the old soldier, even going so far as to call him a coward if he did not find up the corporal, and fight him.

No one who knew Jean Gigon would have subjected him to such an insult; and the quartermaster, who subsequently died in Africa, confessed that, amongst the mistakes he had committed during his life, the one which he regretted the most was his harsh injustice towards Jean Gigon, the bravest of the brave.

At the word "coward," without replying a syllable, Jean Gigon turned his back on the quartermaster, and set off at the top of his speed along the road to Mustapha. On approaching Fort Bab-Azoum, he came up with the corporal of the Foreign Legion, who was proceeding leisurely to his cantonment, and whom he accosted with the most perfect coolness. "I beg your pardon, comrade, but I think it was you who struck me a little while ago?"

"You forced me to do so."

"Oh! I don't bear you any grudge; but I have just been treated as a coward for letting you off without coming to the scratch; and you appear to be too brave a fellow to refuse me the opportunity of proving that I am not exactly what I have been called."

"I thought that the affair had been settled; but as I offered you a reparation, of course I am ready to give it you."

Jean Gigon familiarly took his fellow-soldier's arm, and they thus walked together to the quarters of the Bab-Azoum gate. The corporal had no weapon about him; so he consented to fight with the terrible sabre of the Chasseurs d'Afrique. Two brigadiers of the squadron served as his witnesses; and the platform of a

battery hollowed in the rock was chosen as the field of combat. Jean Gigon also had two witnesses of his acquaintance. Every one, with the exception of the old brigadier, manifested the utmost repugnance at this duel. On reaching the platform, the corporal addressed a few words to the four witnesses, expressing his regret at measuring swords with a man whose reputation could take no harm from an unfortunate and ill-judged expression. "But," he added, "my colleague has explained his reasons, and I am ready."

Jean Gigon thanked the corporal, and they both fell upon their guard. At the first passes, it was evident that the valiant brigadier possessed an incontestable superiority over his adversary. The corporal held his weapon with a firm hand, the point directed straight at Jean Gigon's body, and prudently kept on the defensive.

"Take care, comrade," said Jean Gigon, all at once, "or I shall spit you." He ostentatiously parried the corporal's thrust, and simply indicated the threatened stroke. The corporal did not lose his presence of mind. Two of the witnesses of the encounter affirm that he bore a striking likeness to Jean Gigon. The struggle had lasted for a couple of minutes, and the corporal's arm began to tire.

"Mind your head!" shouted Jean Gigon, whirling his weapon rapidly. The corporal kept his point more steadily directed than ever. Jean Gigon rushed forward, but without striking, and fell, transfixed by his adversary's sabre.

The corporal appeared terrified at his victory. Two of the witnesses led him down a by-path amongst the rocks to the sea-shore, whence he could easily regain the high road, without being obliged to pass through the groups of soldiers who were loitering about to learn the result. At six in the evening, Jean Gigon breathed his last in the hospital of Mustapha. The whole regiment believed that the old brigadier had voluntarily sacrificed his life.

Jean Gigon's funeral was at once grand and whimsical. With the consent of the commanding officers, a deputation from every regiment in garrison at Algiers, and in the environs of the camp of Mustapha Pasha, attended his obsequies. At eight in the morning, in the month of December, the sun had not yet penetrated the sombre clouds that had been piled mountains high by the north-west wind. The sea roared with increasing fury; a torrential rain was falling, while six hundred men assembled around a new-made grave, to bid adieu to their companion in arms. Jean Gigon was laid, with tenderness and precaution, in his final bed of pebbles and sand. His intimate friends passed one by one before him, lifting the sheet that covered his manly face, to take a last farewell. "Adieu, Jean Gigon!" was repeated in a successive variety of mournful tones. At the close of the file, out stepped a tall, emaciated figure, whom everybody believed to be in bed with fever, in the hospital, and in hollow tones pronounced the following incredible oration:

"Messieurs and comrades! Before the earth

is for ever closed over the grave around which you have so numerously assembled, I ought to fulfil the last wishes of the deceased, who yesterday, by accident, was placed beside the bed occupied by his oldest comrade in the corps. 'Godard,' said Jean Gigon, taking me by the hand—by this hand which I now stretch towards you—'Godard, promise me to fulfil my last wish.' 'If the rules of religion are not opposed to it, you may reckon upon me,' I answered. 'Tell me all about the matter.' He told me; and I swore to do it!

"I might," continued Godard, "have called for a general subscription, to execute Jean Gigon's last wishes; but my own private resources were sufficient. 'Godard,' he said, just before breathing his last, 'you know how I have loved the juice of the grape. Well! Promise to lay a bottleful of wine underneath my head, by way of a pillow. I do not care about a high-priced sample; don't put yourself to any great expense; but oblige me in this, and I shall die more easy.' I swore to oblige him, as I have told you; and my poor dear Gigon uttered only one word more—'Marie!'—and gave up the ghost. I now proceed to perform my promise."

Godard—whose harangue was pronounced in a sonorous voice that rose above the raging of the tempest—stretched out his left arm, hitherto covered by his cloak, and displayed to the astonished crowd a bottle of wine carefully sealed with black wax. Then, stooping his lofty person, with his right hand he raised Jean Gigon's head, and gently slipped the bottle beneath it. As he rose, he covered his old friend's face with the winding-sheet, shouting to the Chasseurs in attendance, "Now for the last salute!"

The bacchanalian testament was ultimately carried out to a greater extent than the testator had dared to anticipate. The spot where Jean Gigon was laid, was subsequently transformed into a public-house garden, where sportsmen now enjoy their bottle of wine beneath the shade of a magnificent vine, traditionally known as Jean Gigon's vine, said to have been planted over his grave by his old intimate, the tall Godard.

Eight years after Jean Gigon's death, an ex-corporal of the Foreign Legion, who had settled as a colonist in the neighbourhood of Algiers, died of fever in one of the civil hospitals. As the deceased was not known to have either relations or friends, his body was taken to the dissecting-room, where one of the surgeons discovered an almost imperceptible blue mark on the left temple. By the aid of a lens, he discovered a sort of character, almost effaced by time, resembling those by which the Arabs of different tribes are recognised. It was something like a flash of lightning, exactly the same as that which the Gendarme Gigon had remarked on the foundling he picked up on the road. The entry of the corporal's admission at the hospital gave no other clue to his family than this: "Supposed to be born in 1800, of unknown father and mother." By what horrible fatality was this mysterious mark found on the temple of the man who had been Jean Gigon's last adversary?

Was the poor brigadier killed by his own brother? Nobody will ever know; but, if it was by his brother, it must have been, according to the dates, by his twin-brother.

And that was the end of both the two, as story-books say. Was Jean Gigon's death any great loss? What good did he ever do? He consumed and he destroyed, but he never produced. He planted no tree, he built no house, he brought up no child. He neither discovered nor communicated the least scrap of knowledge or information, theoretical or practical. He owed much to society; he returned nothing, except acting as a unit in the army. His want of self-control prevented him from attaining, or from keeping when attained, an honourable place in his soldierly profession. All we can find to say for him is, that he was an effectual scarecrow for the frightening away of flocks of mischievous Arabs; and that, finding himself quite in the wrong, when he need not have put himself in the wrong at all, he refrained from killing an unoffending fellow-creature and suffered himself to be killed instead—which also he need not have suffered, as a fatal duel was by no means called for. However, this last was almost noble conduct—if it was not delirium tremens.

FRIENDS ON ALL FOURS.

EVERY man who understands himself before he marries, gives, or would like to give, a bit of his heart and a place in his home to a friend on all fours. It is well when, as a solitary being, one sets up a house, or a room, to furnish it with some creature who has penetration enough to believe in one. I never took a zoological or scientific interest in any living companion, never studied a cat or a dog with reference to the great question of instinct in animals, and all pets that belong to other people I abhor. Nevertheless, among departed friends of my youth I reckon one cat and three dogs; among bygone acquaintances some horses; and of these old friends the memory is fresh, although they died two or three dozen years ago.

When I first took out, as an apothecary, my game license against the public, there was in the City of London a certain preserve of game, a district of hereditary patients, into which I and the friend of my soul marched with our mortars. We took up our position on a ground floor, set the trap of a brass plate, and organised a battue in the shape of a large party. But as we did not upon that occasion send round mixture for wine—at any rate it is upon the soul of the wine-merchant and not upon our souls if we did—and as we could charge nothing for our own attendance or for that of our assistant the greengrocer, we got no practice out of the battue. Our most important patient during the six months that followed, was an idiotic kitten.

We had in our rooms, a large theological library and a small kitten. My friend and partner had for brother a divine and scholar, who was himself fixed in a rural parish, but who had left a large part of his library in London. His

books, well pleased with the impressive air they gave our walls, we undertook to warehouse. We had a servant, the best creature in the world, who was almost as idiotic as the kitten; so idiotic that she suffered us to physic her when she felt out of sorts. Idiocy was the maid's only fault. She would, instead of sweeping our rooms of a morning, make expeditions to buy bunches of wallflowers for their decoration; a sweet fancy suggested by her knowledge that young masters wrote poems upon posies.

Such was the home of Moses.

Moses was the kitten. It came to us as a professional fee. It was, indeed, the only fee received by us, Mr. Smilt and Mr. Plog, surgeons, in that brass-plated establishment. The patient was the wife of a Jew in Field-lane. She was visited at her own house, and that, perhaps, was well; for, had she come to us she might have been impressed to an undesirable degree with the extent and portability of our vaunted lines of Fathers. When convalescent, this lady lamented her poverty, asked my friend Plog, who occasionally noticed the tricks of her kitten, whether he would accept little Moses. We did not enter this receipt in the blank penny memorandum book that stood for ledger, but we took the kitten as discharge in full of all demands. Named in defiance of her sex, she was the merriest of little cats, and had her small endearments for us both, until the son of the third floor threw her down stairs.

The fall injured her brain, and from that hour she was a kitten with the manners of a slug. She ate and fattened, but knew nobody, and cared not even for the tip of her own tail. She never scampered, rolled, turned head over heels, scratched our protecting hands, or lapsed into any gesture that was kittenish. Her only movement was a slow walk, with eyes looking always straight before her. The sun in eclipse is not a phenomenon to be compared for darkness with a torpid kitten: with a kitten that will stand for an hour, like the alligator at the Zoological Gardens, without lifting or lowering its head.

Moses succumbed, either to her own disease or to Plog's calomel in cream, and shortly afterwards the partners broke up their establishment. Plog—now the eminent Sir Philipbeg Plog, into whose hand, as he leaves her grace's chamber, I would not advise any one to slip a kitten for a fee—went on his own upward way. I went up hill and down dale towards this surgery of content, in which my Tamarinda mixes my draughts, and in which we are robbed by our grandchildren of lozenges and manna.

The results of independent City practice had, of course, determined me to buy a lot of sick from some other practitioner, giving him a few hundred pounds for the transfer of whatever confidence he might have inspired in the bosom of a nucleus. The patient who is sold in a small lot by a shifting practitioner is not worth anything as an individual, but as a bit of a nucleus. So I resolved to buy a nucleus when the fit opportunity should offer, and meanwhile see practice as assistant to an old-established surgeon.

A fine chance was refused me by that very superior man, Mr. Snidge, who wanted somebody to be imprisoned twelve hours a day in his surgery in Fetter-lane, and take the chance of any recreation that might offer in the way of dispensing, bleeding, and tooth-drawing. In the eyes of Snidge I, Smilt, late of Smilt and Plog, was too young for his place. His reason, perhaps, may have been, that only an old, well-seasoned, nicely torpid man, could have survived a year of it. Then, there was a splendid advertisement in the Times. "Apply at seven hundred and ninety, Euston-square, between seven and nine in the evening." Fifty of us were crammed into a parlour, taking turns to walk into a study, and pass muster before a man with a name very well known to me. "What, Smilt!" "What, Brown!" "This is no place, Smilt, for a man like you." Delicate way of telling Smilt that Brown would rather not.

"Meet me on Wednesday at the Great Prize Cucumber Hotel in Exeter," wrote Jacob Hartiman, to whose advertisement, dated from the far west, I had replied. "You won't be so absurd," said Robinson and Jones and Smith—"you won't be so absurd as to post off upon a wild-geese chase to Exeter upon the merest chance of an engagement!" But I was so absurd. I went to Exeter, and there for the first time saw Hartiman, doctor and squire in his own town. He is terribly old now, and I am getting dim of sight. For forty years we have been friends, and not the shadow of an unkind thought has ever crept between us. Now, as Hartiman has two legs, he is not one of the subjects of this present revelation. But he had twenty-eight legs—seven creatures upon four legs—in his stable. "Can you ride?" he asked, when we first met at Exeter. "In a gig," I answered. "Never was upon a horse but once. Nevertheless, whatever must be, can be. As between horse and rider, one has to run and the other to sit, I think I can sit."

Herein was a delusion; for, as Hartiman's assistant, I was thrown once a week at first, and afterwards pretty punctually once a quarter. But who minds being spilt when scrambling upon four legs up the everlasting hills, or galloping under the greenwood and over the breezy western roads? In the west, at any rate, it never was my fate to be spilt ignominiously at a patient's door. The discreetly eternal silences were always the sole witnesses to any disaster. Even the evidence of a broad facing of road dirt did not matter very much in friendly Somerton. If there was tattle in that little town, I never heard it. To the best of my ears, everybody loved his equals, and devoutly believed in his superiors, reckoning superiority by worldly wealth. Although in Somerton I was not one of their roses, yet I lived near one of their roses. I partook of the conventional respect paid to Mr. Hartiman's worldly position, and of the natural respect paid by all people within twenty miles of our town, to his frank and ever genial character. Moreover, there was this. He had a notion that a country

gentleman ought to be able to break in his own horses; so, he bought unbroken monsters who kicked gigs to splinters, and impartially threw over their necks, bad rider and good. If a man cannot ride, and wishes to avoid exposure, let him select a vicious and unmanageable horse that would toss and tear a Duerow. Whatever may betide him, he will then be able to maintain his self-respect under misfortune.

But these four-legged partners of my daily rounds were really not to blame. I opened my series of visits to the parish poor, in state, attended by a groom in livery, who was to teach me the country, and who was retained also by various half-crowns in the capacity of riding-master. My charger was a chesnut mare, who never ran away with anybody. She had a mouth hard as the muzzle of a cannon, and was almost as much of an idiot as our poor, dear, departed kitten. This animal, who must have heard ghostly muezzins, threw me at sundry times by dropping unexpectedly upon her knees; and when she chose to go down on her knees, no act of forecast short of tying her head to the bough of a tree would prevent it. Whenever there was a choice of two roads, the way most after her heart was to stand still, and take neither. I had no mind to make serious use of the whip: for that is an article of manufacture in the utility of which civilised man now puts, I believe, little faith. As long as our mutual friend Sniggles, the groom, went with us, a corner could usually be turned in ten minutes, by means of some little dismounting, leading, pushing, and persuasion. When, however, I was left alone with my four-legged friend, and had to measure my own skill in argument against that of a horse, truly we spent many a meditative half-hour in the crossways under a direction post. As long, however, as she was not bothered by turnings, this good creature went on, without stopping, at a tolerable shambling pace, with a drop of a foot or a stumble every two minutes. Whether there be a mesmeric power in the mere act of attention, or whether there were really some sense of the bridle in the chesnut lady's mouth, I soon observed that whenever I let my mind travel beyond her ears, and, forgetting her paces, thought about my patients and my posies, though we might be trotting on the very smoothest causeway, down we went.

Now, when I had thus learnt how needful it is for a man to carry his thoughts, when riding, in his horse's head, and keep his own head in his pocket, other steeds were suffered to become my acquaintances. There was an old racer, who flew the rounds, and I liked him. Once, on a hard turnpike road, he came down, and shot me far ahead of him. The fault was mine, for I was wearing my own head instead of his; but we were both up in an instant, skull uncracked and knees unbroken. The only sorrow, worse than a bruised face, that came of these acquaintances, was brought to me by the great horse Tectotum. He was bony and preposterously tall, and always span round

steadily on his own axis when I approached to mount him at a patient's door. He was a new purchase in my time, and it was my misfortune first to ride him to the country-house of a substantial farmer, whose confidence in "only the assistant" I desired to win. It was easy to get off the horse, and in the house all might go well. But when I came out, and when the farmer's wife and eldest daughter stood respectfully at their front door, behold the great Teetotum how he spins! Ah! well! There are memories still glowing, over which we have to rake the ashes of the past. After that day, when I entered a village on Teetotum, and travelled down from the upper regions of his back at the door of the first patient, I led that monster about while I walked from one house to another, and took good care never to go through the agonies of remounting until we had come out at the other side of the village.

This beginning of horsemanship gave me four-footed acquaintances, not friends. Once, however, fairly settled in the open country, I, of course, sought also four-footed friends. Now was the time to keep a dog!

I began modestly by entering into society with a young sheep-dog, who received the professional name of Blister, for which the familiar term is Bliss. Bliss was a happy young dog of full growth, with eyes like jewels, teeth like a shark's, and all a puppy's ecstasy in using them on anything that could be bitten through. Every morning, when I first appeared before him, he flew at me with barks of affection, fixed his teeth firmly in a skirt of my dressing-gown, to pull at it and shake it, as a fiercely cordial man might shake you by the hand. How many days I had enjoyed my Bliss, might have been ascertained at any period by numbering the rents in the tail of my dressing-gown, as clearly as men ascertain the age of trees by counting the rings in the wood. Having breakfasted with me, my friend sat on his tail at the door of my lodging till he saw me mounted. Then, no ingenuity could stay him from joining all my rounds, and making it his business to preach to the sheep of the whole country-side, gathered by him together on the hills in crowded and excited congregations. One morning, however, when there was a round of almost forty miles for us, he was not indulged with any slackenings of pace for his particular convenience. He came home very tired, and after that day satisfied himself with the courtesy of walking out to see me off, but steadily declined to follow.

This active creature went astray, and was a lost dog. Then it became necessary to supply his place; and as it appeared probable that a less boisterous comrade was to be desired as his successor, I bought with gold the friendship of a mild old lady, a thin spaniel with glossy black hair. She had answered for years to the hereditary name of Fan, which is among dogs what Smith is among men.

Now, therefore, I was blessed with a four-footed being who would never go out with the

horse, but was content only to follow me on foot, and visit the sick in our little town of Somerton. She had a good appetite, enlarged in flesh, panted a good deal when our walk was up-hill, ran to and fro within bounds of a very strict discretion, and gave me nothing but the simple flattery of her canine affection. She was a steady every-day person, who had even a sense of Sunday in her nature. When I went out on Sunday morning, without offering to follow me as usual, she jumped into the window-sill, and from that post of observation watched for my return from church. But a time came when, having bought a promising lot of patients, I left the far west, and travelled to the centre of the earth (within Great Britain). Fan went with me, and being unused to the punctualities of travelling, was lost upon the way, at Bristol.

Dark visions of an unprotected female in distress haunted me all the way to this old house at Ortemly, in which I have grown grey. I knew only one man in Bristol, a long lank, rambling hawker, who had reached sometimes even the distant Somerton. He might be at home or abroad: at any rate, to him I wrote, as to the one possible helper. By him the forlorn damsel was found under the protection of a hackney coachman, and in a few days she reached me in a hamper, labelled "a Live Dog, with Care."

The house I took, was haunted. For a black terrier who had once lived there, it was a yarrow constantly to be revisited, and to be explored daily in every corner. The terrier lost no time in declaring his affection for the mature beauty from the west, his love was returned, and blessed with a litter of four puppies. Puppies are not born to be drowned. These were, moreover, very handsome. So they were allowed houseroom until they were of age to be sent out into the world. When they were all of age to run with ease, the sedate Madam Spaniel, with her four little ones behind her, and the terrier ghost usually at her side, waited for me outside the doors of all the patients I had in the village, and dogged my heels in all pedestrian excursions. But the tender puppies required sometimes to be carried. Three of these puppies established themselves in other homes. The mother suddenly died in the midst of her dinner. There remained to me, therefore, only one dog—my last dog, Master Squeak—in-doors: while out of doors there was a friend on all fours in the stable—my first horse.

Pegasus looked well worth the high price she had cost; a noble creature, with fine paces, though she had all her four feet damaged by thrush. Falling at last suddenly lame, she obliged me to walk before her, fifteen miles through mud and rain, slowly conducting her to her own stable: which she left only to be sold, when her paces were recovered, for what she was worth—five pounds. But the good soul had mettle enough for a hundred legs, and we were friends together. She had but one bad habit, and it was one that I thought unsociable. When

I mounted her, she always chose the moment of my setting one foot in the stirrup, for bolting off with all her speed. I had to acquire the art of flying after her into the saddle, and, for want of an education at Astley's, was continually being laid prostrate at patients' doors. Once when my foot had caught in the stirrup, I was dragged before a row of patients' windows after the manner of Hector. But the heart of that Pegasus was sounder than her feet. We often exchanged little endearments, and I am confident that it was her intention to oblige me by that over promptitude of service. We were each of us professionally eager to get on.

The dog Squeak was my last friend on all fours. Upon his being shot, I married. He grew to be the handsomest, and busiest, and merriest dog in the world. The quickness of his sympathy met every shade upon the face he watched. In-doors, his mind was his master's; out of doors, he was his own master, and it was for him always to appoint, and for nobody to dictate, whether he should be out of doors or in. As a puppy, he was a devourer of literature, and ate most of the corners from my books and journals. So he became wise. As to his other meals, he was not to dine with me, forsooth! A tyrannical housekeeper, if he were heard to be near me at dinner-time, dragged him away by the neck. Very well. He had only to take care that he was *not* heard. He announced his arrival by a sly scratch at the door, audible by no ears beyond mine, and ate his meat, as still as a stuffed dog—which he always was when he had finished. He was not to sleep of nights at the foot of my bed, forsooth! A tyrannical housekeeper resolved to lock him out. Very well. He had only to scramble up to the kitchen roof, whence it was an easy leap into my bedroom through a window-pane. He was a bold dog, who did not regard shut windows as any obstacles to his advancement. Before I understood him well, I shut him up once or twice in a room, when I did not wish him to go out with me; but as he always came after me with a flying leap through a clatter of glass, and broke the window-frame itself sometimes, he had his way left open for him. He was a right fellow to make his way in the world. The bedroom window I allowed to be mended seven times. Money was spent on glaziers' bills, and walking-stick on admonition. Soon tired of beating my dog, I allowed him to beat me. He was still remorselessly to be locked out; I had therefore the prudence to leave him the seventh smash in my window as an entrance hole. The only difference made by the housekeeper's discipline was that the dog had a run in the mud every night to give him a new relish for his corner of the counterpane. As for tying him up, nobody thought of that. He was such an incarnation of determined freedom, that nobody short of a

King of Naples could have thought of putting him in chains.

Once, indeed, he was in bondage; caught in a poacher's wire during his independent rambles through adjoining game preserves, where trespassers were rigorously to be prosecuted and all dogs were to be shot. We lost our comrade for two days, and then he came home, dirty, starved, and haggard, with the wire about his neck; he had broken it after some thirty hours of struggling. But there was a twinkle of roguery in his eye even then, and he was off to the preserves again, certainly none the later for his lesson.

We had a farm-yard near us, from which my friend upon all fours, when he stayed at home, would hunt me up a fowl, or the old cock himself sometimes, fetching in the indignant bird unhurt between his teeth, and depositing him in triumph at my feet upon the study floor. What man could quarrel with his generous and fearless nature? He never feared and never hurt any one in his life—except some other dog who challenged him to fight. He simply disregarded pain. If a dog, not smaller and weaker than himself, insulted him, he fought and would fight. Beat him who might, he meant to have his fight out, and he always finished it to his own satisfaction. For the weak, he had heroic tenderness. A little kitten used to nestle on his clean warm coat when he lay sleeping, and regarded him as a feather bed. If he awoke, and found the kitten asleep on his back, he would lie still, like a kind-hearted gentleman. The sight of a bone itself would not induce him to leap suddenly up and throw her off.

Yet he liked bones. He has disgraced me by following me out of a patient's home with a large piece of bacon in his mouth. He was bold enough, when tempted by the savour of a knuckle of veal boiling in the pot, to put his fore-feet on the side of a patient's kitchen fire and jerk the meat out of the pot upon the kitchen floor. And he made friends with those whom he thus persecuted. To some he boldly gave his confidence, visiting at their houses on his own account, not as a mean haunter of back doors, but as a friend of the family. If he liked people, he visited them fairly, walked into their drawing-rooms, and sat down with them for half an hour or so, by their fireside. He was the cleanest of true gentlemen, for he swam twice a day across a broad and rapid river; he was not the dog to let himself be conveyed with me ignominiously in the ferry-boat over the water that ran through the middle of my rounds. Of course there could be only one end to the life of such a dog. He was shot by a gamekeeper.

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